

UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

Teaching and assessing spoken English in Finnish upper secondary schools

Students' perceptions

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Master's Thesis
English Studies
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May 2019



Tiedekunta/Osasto – Fakultet/Sektion – Faculty Humanistinen / Kielten osasto		
Tekijä – Författare – Author Meri, Emmi		
Työn nimi – Arbetets titel – Title Teaching and assessing spoken English in Finnish upper secondary schools: Students' perceptions		
Oppiaine – Läroämne – Subject Englantilainen filologia		
Työn laji – Arbetets Maisterintutkielma	Aika – Datum – Month and year Toukokuu 2019	Sivumäärä – Sidoantal – Number of pages 57 + liitteet (11 sivua)
Tiivistelmä – Referat – Abstract <p>Vieraiden kielten suullisen kielitaidon osaamiseen ja viestinnälliseen kielitaitoon on alettu kiinnittää huomiota yhä enemmän viime vuosikymmeninä. Englannin suullisen kielitaidon opetusta ja arviointia lukiossa on kuitenkin tähän asti tutkittu enimmäkseen opettajien näkökulmasta. Ylioppilaskirjoituksiin lisättävää suullisen kielitaidon osakoetta kehitetään parhaillaan, minkä vuoksi on tärkeää antaa puheenvuoro myös lukio-opiskelijoille. Tämä tutkielma kartoittaa lukio-opiskelijoiden näkemyksiä englannin suullisen kielitaidon opetuksesta ja arvioinnista sekä tulevasta sähköisestä suullisen kielitaidon osakokeesta englannin ylioppilaskokeessa. Tutkielman aineisto kerättiin käyttäen verkkopohjaista kyselylomaketta, johon vastasi 212 lukiolaista. Tutkimuskysymykset ovat:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Mitä lukiolaiset ajattelevat suullisen kielitaidon opettamisesta ja arvioinnista?2. Kuinka suullista kielitaitoa tulisi lukiolaisten mukaan mitata ylioppilaskokeessa?3. Millaisia asenteita lukiolaisilla on sähköistä suullisen kielitaidon osakoetta kohtaan? <p>Tutkielman tulosten mukaan lukiolaiset ovat myönteisiä suullisen kielitaidon opetusta kohtaan ja toivoisivat lisää viestinnällisiä tehtäviä oppitunneille. Etenkin tytöt ovat kuitenkin epävarmoja englannin puhumisesta luokassa. Suullisen kielitaidon arvioinnin kriteerit ovat monille lukiolaisille epäselviä, eivätkä he ole täysin varmoja, kuinka suullista kielitaitoa tulisi arvioida. Vaikka suuri osa lukiolaisista tukee suullisen kielitaidon osakokeen lisäämistä ylioppilaskokeeseen, ovat heidän vastauksensa jakautuneet voimakkaasti puolesta ja vastaan. Ylioppilaskokeen takaistusvaikutuksen on todettu ohjaavan lukion opetusta, ja siten myös suullisen kielitaidon osakokeella voisi olla positiivisia vaikutuksia suullisen kielitaidon opettamiseen ja arviointiin. Ylioppilaskokeen takaistusvaikutus näkyy lukiolaisten vastauksissa siten, että monen mielestä suullista kielitaitoa tulisi opettaa enemmän, jos sitä testattaisiin ylioppilaskokeessa. Lisäksi moni vastasi osallistuvansa suullisen englannin kurssille todennäköisemmin, jos suullisen kielitaidon koe olisi osana englannin ylioppilaskoetta. Ylioppilaskokeiden sähköistyminen ei huolestuttanut lukiolaisia, vaikka suurimmalla osalla heistä ei ollut kokemusta mobiililaitteiden käytöstä suullisen kielitaidon harjoitteluun oppitunneilla. Tulosten valossa voidaan todeta, että lukiolaiset tarvitsevat lisää harjoitusta ja sen tuomaa varmuutta suullisessa kielitaidossa vielä ennen suullisen kielitaidon osakokeen käyttöönottoa ylioppilaskokeessa.</p>		
Avainsanat – Nyckelord – Keywords suullinen kielitaito, englanti vieraana kielenä, opetus, arviointi, lukio, ylioppilaskoe		
Säilytyspaikka – Förvaringställe – Where deposited Helsingin yliopiston kirjasto – Helda / E-thesis (opinnäytteet)		
Muita tietoja – Övriga uppgifter – Additional information Englannin suullisen kielitaidon opetus ja arviointi suomalaisissa lukioissa: Opiskelijoiden näkemykset		

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1 INTRODUCTION

Speaking is the most natural method of communication and can be seen as the main function of language. Although the goal for many foreign language learners is often to achieve the ability to communicate in a given language, both orally and in written form, the latter seems to have been emphasized in the Finnish upper secondary school classrooms. As communicative language teaching has gained support and recognition during the past few decades, there has been talk of adding an oral test in the Matriculation Examination for foreign languages. For a long time, it seemed practically unattainable because of its large scale and complex implementation, but now as the digitalization of the Matriculation Examination has been finalized, organizing a computer-assisted oral test is possible at last. This will become a reality at the earliest in 2022, when the first oral test will be organized according to the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture (Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö 2017a: 53). Until now, the lack of an oral test in the Matriculation Examination has led to a negative washback effect on the teaching and assessment of oral skills in upper secondary school (Mäkelä 2005; Yli-Renko 1991). When the oral test will be included in the Matriculation Examination, it can be expected to affect positively the teaching of oral skills as well.

The present study examines upper secondary school students' perceptions on the teaching and assessment of oral language skills and on the upcoming oral test in the Matriculation Examination for English. The results of the study are analyzed with both quantitative and qualitative methods. The research data was gathered in February 2019 with an online survey targeting Finnish upper secondary school students. The research questions are:

1. What do upper secondary school students think of the current practices of teaching and evaluating oral skills?
2. From the students' perspective, how should oral proficiency be evaluated in the Matriculation Examination?
3. What kind of attitudes do the students have towards the computer-based oral test?

Teaching and testing oral skills in Finnish upper secondary schools has been widely studied in the past few decades (see e.g. Kemiläinen 2018; Ahola-Houtsonen 2013; Huuskonen & Kähkönen 2006; Mäkelä 2005; Yli-Renko 1991). However, most of the studies have focused on the views of English teachers instead of the students. In previous studies, teachers have viewed teaching and assessing oral skills as very important but argued that large group sizes, lack of time and lack of students' motivation make it complicated (Kemiläinen 2018; Ahola-Houtsonen 2013; Kaski-Akhawan 2013; Huuskonen & Kähkönen 2006). Similarly, students have been generally supportive of oral language teaching, but many are cautious of speaking a foreign language because of shyness, lack of confidence and the fear of making mistakes (Mäkelä 2005; Yli-Renko 1991).

Due to the small number of studies targeting upper secondary school students, the scope of this study is limited to exploring students' views on the learning, teaching and testing of oral language skills. This study aims to determine what the students think of the sufficiency and variability of spoken activities performed in upper secondary school English classes, as well as how they use spoken English outside the classroom. Furthermore, this study aspires to investigate the students' views on the assessment practices of oral language skills, the upcoming oral test in the Matriculation Examination and the digitalization of testing.

This paper organizes as follows. Chapter 2 discusses the theoretical background of the study, focusing on the concepts of language proficiency and communicative competence, the processes of learning, teaching and testing oral proficiency and, lastly, discussing previous studies on teachers, students and oral proficiency. Chapter 3 introduces the material and methods of this study. In chapter 4, the results of the study are presented, and they are further discussed in chapter 5. The limitations of the study and suggestions for further research are also presented in chapter 5. Finally, chapter 6 concludes the study.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This chapter has been divided into four subsections. Section 2.1 with its subsections focus on defining language proficiency, communicative competence and the difference between spoken and written communication. Section 2.2 deals with how to teach and learn oral language skills and what the National Core Curriculum for General Upper Secondary Schools says about learning oral language skills, also using the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) for reference. From teaching and learning oral skills, I will move on to discussing assessing oral proficiency. In section 2.3, I will first focus on testing and assessing oral proficiency in general, and then move on to the Matriculation Examination in Finnish upper secondary schools. Then, I will look at computer-assisted language testing (CALT), which links with the ongoing digitalization of the Matriculation Examination. The final section will present recent studies that introduce teachers' and students' views on teaching and learning oral language skills and place the present study among its theoretical background.

2.1 Language proficiency, communication and spoken and written language

2.1.1 Defining language proficiency and communicative competence

Language proficiency in the modern world is often seen as the ability to communicate in a language. In this thesis, I will use the definition for language proficiency from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), which was developed to support educational institutions and professionals in evaluating students' linguistic competences by giving reference levels to grading students. The CEFR (2018: 30) divides overall language proficiency into *general competences*, *communicative language competences*, *communicative language activities* and *communicative language strategies*, which have replaced the traditional model of the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing).

Originally, language learning was seen as mainly a cognitive matter, where one had to simply memorize foreign words. In the 1960's, the audio-lingual method was developed, focusing on teaching listening, speaking, reading and writing (in that order) through learning sample dialogs and grammatical drills by heart (Savignon 2018:

2). Only later, it was found that language could be learned, in fact, through the process of social interaction. Hymes (1972: 281) coined the term *communicative competence*, bringing the use of language to a social context. When Hymes brought the term *competence* to a sociolinguistic perspective, he defined communicative competence as something that was not only linguistic, but also, in fact, grammatical competence used in communicative situations in an appropriate way (ibid.).

The basis for studying communicative competence had been laid and many researchers took part in the discussion. Canale and Swain (1980: 6) were among the first to discuss adopting the communicative approach into second language teaching and how then both principles – grammatical and sociocultural competence – should be integrated into the classroom. In addition, they stressed that teaching communicative competence should eventually lead to communicative performance (or *actual communication*, cf. Canale 1983: 5), which refers to the actual use of language in “real second language situations and for *authentic* communication purposes” (Canale and Swain 1980: 6, emphasis in original). Canale and Swain proposed a theoretical framework for communicative competence intended to be applied to second language teaching and testing, dividing communicative competence into three parts: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence (ibid.). According to Canale and Swain, grammatical competence provides learners with the ability to know how to express themselves accurately, i.e. the rules of syntax, morphology and phonology. Sociolinguistic competence includes the sociocultural rules of language use and discourse, i.e. using appropriate language in a certain cultural context. Lastly, strategic competence refers to verbal and non-verbal communication strategies, i.e. paraphrasing grammatical forms that one cannot remember at that moment or addressing a person whose social status is unknown.

Unlike Canale and Swain, Savignon (1972) emphasized more strongly ability in her concept of communicative competence. Savignon was one the first scholars to challenge the audio-lingual theory empirically, as she proved that practice in spontaneous communication could enhance the students’ communicative competence without decreasing their grammatical accuracy (Savignon 1972; Savignon 2018). As years went on, the shortcomings of the audio-lingual method and the four-skills model of language were recognized (Savignon 2018: 4). In addition, the development of

audio and visual recording technology pushed language research further (ibid.). In her recent work from 2018, Savignon concludes that communicative competence should be set as a goal for today's second or foreign language evaluation (p. 6).

2.1.2 Spoken and written communication

At its most basic level, oral language is about communicating with other people. However, in order to communicate in a foreign language, one is obliged to know a certain amount of grammar and vocabulary (Bygate 1987: 3). Even so, speaking successfully requires many skills that differentiate from mastering written language skills. For example, a speaker needs to articulate clearly by using multiple speech organs, produce the prosodic aspects of speech such as intonation and speech rhythm correctly, and use the language in a socially appropriate manner (Hughes 2016: 5). As we look at the differences between spoken and written discourse, we can see that spoken discourse is often “unplanned, context dependent, transient, oral or aural and dynamic” whereas written discourse is “static, planned, decontextualized, non-transient and visual or motoric” (Hughes 2016: 8). The characteristics of spoken language should be visible also in the teaching and learning of oral skills, so that foreign language learners would become familiar not only with how to perform on paper but also with using the target language in authentic, communicative, situations.

Hildén (2000: 172) defines speech communication as interaction between interlocutors in connection with each other, often simultaneously but not always. In other words, speech communication covers all communicative language functions in a way or another. Speech communication skills are often described to consist of three kinds of skills: linguistic skills (grammar and phonetics), functional skills (pragmatics and sociolinguistics) and strategic skills (controlling and planning the interaction process and making use of one's own competences to achieve the communicative goal) (ibid.). They all put the speaker's knowledge, skills and intentions into the perspective of the surrounding world, independent of the speaker's linguistic tools to implement their ideas (p. 173). Speech communication skills also include oral language skills that refer to the skills and knowledge required in communicative language functions where spoken language is used to pass on information in the target language (ibid.). Hildén points out the language-specificity of spoken language skills (e.g. English language

skills) and that one can have oral skills in several languages. However, the practice of oral skills in any language improves speech communication skills as a whole (ibid.).

When teaching spoken language, it is crucial to understand the difference between knowledge about a language and skill in using it, for the issues in both areas may require different pedagogical actions (Bygate 1987: 3). Teachers need to ensure that the learner will be able to convert the skills they have learned from supervised learning in the classroom to real-life use of the skill (Wilkins 1975: 76, cited in Bygate 1987: 6). Therefore, the learner needs to be exposed to making decisions about communication, such as what to say, how, when and so on, already in the classroom.

2.2 Teaching and learning oral proficiency

2.2.1 Teaching and learning spoken language skills

The history of teaching and learning the spoken language is fairly short; it made an impact on foreign language teaching only after the Second World War (Brown and Yule 1983: 2). Initially the focus of spoken language teaching was on the learning of correct pronunciation, but later it widened to include listening comprehension tasks and practice in using spoken language spontaneously instead of reading written-language sentences aloud (ibid.). Providing students with the ability to communicate in a foreign language was finally acknowledged and it is still emphasized in modern spoken language teaching and learning.

One approach to increase learning spoken language skills is communicative language teaching (CLT), which refers to processes and goals in classroom learning (Byram 2000: 181). The main focus of the approach is on the learners and their communicative needs. Some teachers have debated on the unimportance of grammatical or formal accuracy in CLT, although, while communicative competence is in the center of the approach, communication also needs structure, grammar and the interlocutors' negotiation of meaning in order to succeed (p. 184). Additionally, CLT does not concern exclusively face-to-face oral communication but can be applied also to reading and writing activities (p. 186). Features of CLT may be referred to with terms such as 'process oriented', 'task-based' or 'inductive'.

Harmer (2007: 348-353) lists some widely used oral classroom activities with a communicative aspect. *Acting from a script* is the first activity on the list and refers to students acting out dialogues or scenes. Harmer (p. 349) advises to create a supportive atmosphere in the class and give the students enough practice before they perform the script, if that is the final purpose of the task. *Communication games* intend to provoke communication between students by creating an information gap they need to fill (ibid.). Harmer (p. 350) points out that *discussion* is a good way to get students to communicate, but in order to avoid any uncomfortable situations in front of the whole class, the students should have a chance for a quick discussion in small groups before having to speak in public. Discussions can be used in classrooms in many ways, from small group work to formal debates. *Prepared talks*, although not designed for spontaneous communication, represent a kind of speaking genre and can be of use for both speakers and listeners in learning about communication in foreign languages (p. 351). Pre-planned *questionnaires* prepare both the questioner and the respondent with something to say and can be designed on any suitable topic (p. 352). Finally, Harmer lists *simulation and role-play*, in which the students ‘simulate’ real-life events or social encounters where they might need the foreign language. Using simulation, the students get to practice their speaking skills but also rehearse for specific situations like job interviews. Role-play, on the other hand, may allow shyer students to express themselves more freely as they are pretending to be someone else during the activity (p. 353). Overall, classroom activities should consist of various types of communicative activities in order to prepare the students with a vast knowledge of the spoken language.

Even though the importance of communicative competence is now understood even on a national level as it has been emphasized in the national curriculum for language teaching, the change in upper secondary school classrooms is not always very swift. As the Matriculation Examination has so far focused on written skills and comprehension, they tend to dominate the teaching as well. Reports on the Matriculation Examination-driven teaching can be drawn up from several studies, which I will look at more closely in the later sections discussing teachers’ and students’ perceptions towards oral language teaching and testing.

2.2.2 National Core Curriculum for General Upper Secondary Schools

The Finnish National Board of Education sets the national core curriculum for general upper secondary schools, determining the goals for learning and giving guidelines for the content teachers should follow in their teaching. Consequently, also foreign language teaching and its assessment are defined in the curriculum. The general objectives of the instruction in foreign languages include e.g. helping the students gain confidence to use language in various contexts, enhancing their overall language proficiency, providing the students with different language-learning strategies and teaching the students about self-evaluation and planning their future language studies (National core curriculum 2015: 114-115).

As was mentioned in section 2.1.1, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), provided by the Council of Europe, sets guidelines for syllabuses, curricula and teaching and testing materials for languages. The purpose of the framework is to define comprehensibly what kind of skills and knowledge learners need to accomplish in a particular language in order to communicate effectively (CEFR 2018: 26). The CEFR has had a great influence on Finnish language education as has provided teachers with detailed scales for almost every aspect of language learning (Inha & Mattila 2018). Already in 2003, the CEFR was connected to the National Core Curriculum for General Upper Secondary Schools and has been used widely in Finnish schools ever since (Inha & Mattila 2018: para. 2). The scales give objectives for reference levels from Pre-A1 to C2. Although originally the scale had only six reference levels, in Finnish evaluation they were later divided into smaller levels to more detailed assessment (*ibid.*).

For English as the first foreign language, upper secondary school students should accomplish the skills of interaction, text interpretation and text production all in level B2.1 of the Evolving Language Proficiency Scale (National core curriculum 2015: 115). According to the national curriculum, the specific objectives of instruction of English as an A-language consist of the students' development as users of English and as global citizens, understanding English as a global language, being able to self-evaluate one's own language proficiency, being able to plan future language studies, becoming more experienced in reading, interpreting and discussing in English and being able to relate one's own competence with the B2.1 level of the Evolving

Language Proficiency Scale, assessing the development of the competence, and further developing it (National core curriculum 2015: 117).

The abovementioned objectives should be present in the instruction of all six compulsory courses of English as well as the two national specialization courses. In 2008, one optional specialization course (ENA8 in the English curriculum) was changed into a course specifically designed to practice oral skills (Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö 2017a: 51). The teacher assesses the course with an oral skills test set by the Finnish National Board of Education (National core curriculum 2015: 242). After the course, a separate certificate of the oral skills test is given to the students.

2.3 Testing oral proficiency

2.3.1 Testing and assessing oral proficiency

Already in 1961, Lado (p. 239) wrote: “The ability to speak a foreign language is without doubt the most highly prized language skill, and rightly so [...] Yet testing the ability to speak a foreign language is perhaps the least developed and the least practiced in the language testing field.” The lack of testing spoken language skills has often been validated by the difficulty of it. When testing speaking, the rater needs to be present during the oral performance or, alternatively, the oral performance needs to be recorded somehow in order to be evaluated later (Ginther 2013: 1). An elicitation method (and how controlled it is, cf. Underhill 1987: 44) needs to be selected, and if rating scales for oral performance do not exist yet, they need to be developed (Ginther 2013: 1). Also, teachers need training so they can objectively test their students (ibid.). Still, it seems that as long as the high-stakes testing at the end of upper secondary school, in Finland the Matriculation Examination, focuses on written language skills, testing oral language skills will not be prioritized in foreign language classrooms either.

When testing oral proficiency, the speaking task type should depend on what needs to be tested. Luoma (2004: 48) divides speaking task types into open-ended and structured task types. Open-ended task types measure oral skills directly by guiding the discussion but allowing the students to achieve the task requirements by multiple ways. Structured speaking tasks, on the other hand, have specified acceptable responses. A speaking task type may also combine elements from both groups and is

then called a semi-structured task type. An example of a semi-structured task could be having to react to a certain situation by using appropriate language (p. 49). If an oral test aims at measuring students' communicative competence, open-ended or semi-structured task types are the most suitable ones as they give the students more freedom in forming their answers.

Although often used interchangeably in an educational setting, understanding the difference between *testing* and *assessment* is of great importance when discussing the field of language learning. Underhill (1987: 1) defines an oral test as “a test in which a person is encouraged to speak, and is then assessed on the basis of that speech”. In its early years, the field of language assessment was called simply *language testing* (Hamp-Lyons 2016: 13). The term *assessment* found its way into common use much later and served a different purpose than just a test. Assessment can be seen as a softer sort of test and may consist of not only tests but also other evaluation of the student's abilities (Hamp-Lyons 2016: 14). Hamp-Lyons (ibid.) distinguishes three types of purposes for assessing language: achievement, proficiency and assessing for language aptitude. They can also be defined as backward-looking, present-focused and forward-looking, depending on whether they measure the content that has been covered, for example, in a language course, general language command or the potential to learn language (ibid.). The Matriculation Examination could be considered as present-focused, so measuring language proficiency, as succeeding in the test often requires a wide knowledge of the language.

When the assessment for foreign languages is large-scale and national, it may have intentional and unintentional impacts on the instruction of the language, also a phenomenon called *washback effect* (Pižorn & Huhta 2016: 249). Washback (or ‘backwash’) indicates the effect tests have on the teaching program when the curriculum organizes around a large-scale test such as the Matriculation Examination (McNamara 1996: 23). McNamara (ibid.) suggests that if communicative tests focusing on performance were organized, it might have a positive washback effect on teaching, as students would have to be equipped for communicative language use both in the test and in real life.

As high-stakes tests, such as the Matriculation Examination, affect the life chances of the candidates by determining their access to further education or employment, they

also tend to guide the instruction strongly (Saville & Khalifa 2016: 78). In addition to curriculum planning, high-stakes tests might also influence teaching materials and create commercial opportunities such as tutoring or expensive cram schools that often promise the students better grades (ibid.). According to Pollari (2016: 204), the washback effect seems to influence more strongly the final upper secondary school courses comparing to the earlier ones. A similar finding was made by Ahola-Houtsonen (2013: 63), as upper secondary school students signaled that speaking skills were practiced less when the Matriculation Examination was approaching. Because of the high stakes, teachers might feel pressured to focus on the things tested in the Matriculation Examination, which so far in the English test have been reading and listening comprehension, written skills and vocabulary and structures (Ylioppilastutkintolautakunta 2017: 9). When there will be an oral test in the Matriculation Examination, teachers can be expected to put more emphasis on the teaching of oral skills as well.

2.3.2 The Matriculation Examination in Finnish upper secondary schools

The Matriculation Examination is a national exam generally taken at the end of the Finnish upper secondary school. Its function is to see whether the upper secondary school students have acquired the knowledge and skills entailed in the curriculum and whether they have reached the level of maturity for applying to higher education (Ylioppilastutkintolautakunta 2018). From 2016 onwards, the examination has gone through the process of digitalization and is entirely digital the first time in spring 2019. The digital exam makes it possible to use more varied task types in the test, such as pictures, audio and video (ibid.), which, especially in foreign languages, increases the authenticity of the tasks.

Digitalization, as well as the increasing appreciation of speaking skills in foreign languages, have also brought back the discussion of adding an oral test into the examination. The discussion about the oral test has been active already for decades. In 1988 and again later in 2006, the Ministry of Education investigated the possibility of adding an oral test to the Matriculation Examination of foreign languages (Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö 2017a: 51; Takala 1993: 35). Before the digitalization, the considered methods for testing oral skills in the Matriculation Examination were language studio testing, interviewing, pair work and group discussion (Opetus- ja

kulttuuriministeriö 2017a: 51). Both times, it was reported that testing oral skills on such a large scale would not be realistic. The digitalization of the Matriculation Examination made testing oral skills finally possible as the implementation of the test as well as the assessment process could be conducted partly electronically. Many things still need to be taken into consideration: developing task types, examining the technical and physical testing arrangements, establishing the assessment criteria and training sensors, raters and teachers (Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö 2017a: 52). According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (2017a: 53), the first oral tests could be conducted as part of the Matriculation Examination in 2022 at the earliest.

2.3.3 Computer-assisted language testing (CALT)

In the past few decades, there has been an extensive increase in the availability of computers and the Internet. It has affected our daily lives irreversibly as a great part of our social encounters, work life and studies have shifted online. It is no wonder, then, that also language learning, teaching and testing have gone through changes and will continue to change. Technological innovations have influenced many areas of language testing, such as including task type design, scoring, reporting and validation (Van Moere & Downey 2016: 342). In the 1960's, the introduction of optical mark recognition made language testing and scoring dramatically easier and faster when multiple choice answer-sheets could be scored by a machine instead of the teacher (ibid.). Today, we are seeing another type of change happening in language testing as computer-assisted language testing (CALT) is taking over the traditional paper-and-pencil test in the Finnish Matriculation Examination.

Computer-assisted language testing (CALT) refers to evaluating the test takers' performance in a language by using computer applications as help (Suvorov & Hegelheimer 2013: 1). It is a part of computer-assisted language assessment (CALA), which defines as using technology to enhance the assessment of language skills (Winke & Isbell 2017: 1). Some researchers are worried about the automatic scoring of speaking skills, especially with high-stakes exams, because evaluating coherence, content and logic seems impossible to automate (Suvorov & Hegelheimer 2013: 16). Moreover, using multimedia and integrated tasks, although possibly increasing the authenticity of the tasks, are considered problematic because of their complex interpretations (ibid.). Despite the issues and concerns of CALT, it may provide

language testing with many possibilities such as more authentic tasks, speech and emotion recognition and further even automatically generated test items by computers (ibid.). In the future, computers could even act as both raters and interlocutors in language testing, reacting to the students' responses and adapting tasks in real-time according to the students' performance (ibid.).

Before the digitalization of testing, Luoma (2004: 45) compared live and tape-based testing modes in assessing speaking. According to Luoma (ibid.), while live, face-to-face, assessment of speaking would be ideal as it is two-directional interaction whereas tape-based testing is only one-directional, a tape-based test is essential when a large group of students is tested. However, according to Luoma (ibid.), the test takers' language tended to be more literate and less oral-like when speaking to a tape recorder instead of a person. Also, many test takers felt more anxious about the test when being recorded and when they could not use expressions or gestures, only speak (ibid.). Luoma (2004: 55) mentions that when testing oral skills in large-scale formal tests, the testers' varied skills and the comparability between interlocutors might endanger the fairness of the testing outcomes. Because of this, the ongoing digitalization of testing will not only make oral testing more efficient but also more objective, as computers will always be more consistent in evaluating students than human testers.

The development of the oral test for the Matriculation Examination is currently taking place and, according to the Finnish Ministry of Culture and Education, will make use of the findings of the DigiTala research project (2017: 52). DigiTala is an interdisciplinary research project specifically indicated to develop the computer-assisted oral language test for the Matriculation Examination by producing and empirically testing new digital settings and tools (DigiTala 2015). With the project, researchers are trying to find out the consistency level of the ratings by humans and speech recognition tools, comparing them with indicators such as student performance in other areas of language, investigating the impact of technical and acoustic factors and the perceptions of students and teachers towards CALT (ibid.).

As CALT will most likely grow more and more in the future, it should be kept in mind that although students should be familiar with computer-assisted testing by now, many of them do not have much experience with computer-assisted *oral* testing. Therefore, the students should be given opportunities to practice the new task types and digital

settings that come along with the digital oral test before participating in the Matriculation Examination. This thesis will look at upper secondary school students and their views on CALT but also more generally on the teaching and assessment of spoken language skills.

2.4 Teachers, students and oral proficiency

2.4.1 Teachers' perspectives

The previous sections described the theoretical framework of learning, teaching and assessing spoken language skills in general and more specifically in Finnish upper secondary schools. This section will look at studies that present upper secondary school teachers' views on teaching and assessing spoken language skills. In general, most teachers view teaching oral language skills positively and as an essential part of their teaching (Kemiläinen 2018: 38; Kaski-Akhawan 2013: 51; Huuskonen & Kähkönen 2006: 125). However, although the importance of learning oral language skills is acknowledged, the reality of the classroom may be quite different. Lack of time, large group sizes and the washback effect of the Matriculation Examination are among the reasons why teachers feel teaching oral language skills is often neglected (Kemiläinen 2018; Ahola-Houtsonen 2013; Kaski-Akhawan 2013; Huuskonen & Kähkönen 2006). Students' shyness to speak and general inefficiency were also reported as reasons complicating teaching oral language skills (Huuskonen & Kähkönen 2006: 84).

Although several studies (e.g. Ahola-Houtsonen 2013; Mäkelä 2005; Yli-Renko 1991) have reported that students' motivation to practice oral language skills is generally high, lack of motivation was, quite surprisingly, another reported issue affecting teaching spoken skills (Kemiläinen 2018: 38; Huuskonen & Kähkönen 2006: 84). I agree with Kemiläinen (2018: 38), that the lack of an oral test in the Matriculation Examination is probably one reason for this. A vast majority of teachers in Kemiläinen's study (2018: 34) responded that including an oral test in the Matriculation Examination would affect their teaching and assessment of oral skills. This proves in a sense that teachers plan their instruction according to the Matriculation Examination and this way partake in the washback effect.

When asked whether there should be an oral test in the Matriculation Examination, teachers remain quite divided (Kemiläinen 2018: 31; Kaski-Akhawan 2013: 47). Despite its positive effect on learning oral skills in the classroom, many were worried about the lack of resources, the increasing workload of both teachers and students and adding more pressure on students (Kemiläinen 2018: 32; Kaski-Akhawan 2013: 47; Huuskonen & Kähkönen 2006: 133). Also, some were skeptic about the computer-assisted oral test as it would not include face-to-face interaction (Kemiläinen 2018: 32).

2.4.2 Students' perspectives

While the section above presented teachers' opinions, I will now move on to studies focusing on the matter from the students' perspective, which is also the topic of my study. One of the earliest Finnish studies on learning speaking skills is by Yli-Renko (1991), who studied quantitatively upper secondary school students' opinions on learning spoken language skills. The results of the study indicated that a majority of the students wished to learn more oral language skills in upper secondary school (p. 65). However, at the same time most students were content with traditional teaching methods that often emphasize written language skills and comprehension (*ibid.*). Yli-Renko (p. 66) believes that this is because of the written nature of the Matriculation Examination. The students pointed out that if there was an oral test in the Matriculation Examination, oral language skills should be practiced more in the classroom as well (p. 56), which coincides with the theory of washback discussed in section 2.3.1.

It has been studied that language anxiety may affect negatively on oral language performance, not only by a weaker performance in the test situation but also by more negative attitudes towards language learning in general because of the anxiety (Hewitt & Stephenson 2012; Phillips 1992). As many as 90% of the 236 respondents in Yli-Renko's study were afraid of speaking foreign languages (1991: 65). In addition, Yli-Renko (p. 60) found that girls were shyer to speak than boys were. A similar finding was made in Mäkelä's (2005: 159) study, in which he focused on English textbooks and the opinions of Finnish English teachers and upper secondary school students. Lack of confidence and the fear of making mistakes were found to be common concerns among students in several studies (Khamkhien 2011: 96; Korpela 2010: 69-79; de Saint Léger & Storch 2009: 278). If teachers want their students to practice oral

skills, it is apparent that the speaking situation should be as stress-free as possible. Also, teachers need to take shy speakers into account when planning their lessons, as practicing oral skills does not necessarily require performing in front of the class or otherwise being in the center of attention.

When asked about including the oral test in the English Matriculation Examination, both Yli-Renko (1991: 56) and Mäkelä (2005: 114) reported that almost half of the students were more or less in favor of the exam. Similarly, in Tarvainen's (2014: 37-39) study, a clear majority of the students agreed that it is important to test oral skills in the Matriculation Examination, although almost half of the students also responded that they were happy about not having to do the oral part in the exam. Many students were concerned that personal factors, such as stress and anxiety, might affect their performance negatively in the oral test (Mäkelä 2005: 114; Yli-Renko 1991: 57). Also, students worried that inequality between students from different backgrounds might increase, as it is easier for some to travel and practice the target language depending on financial status (Yli-Renko 1991: 57). This worry might not be as relevant today, when practicing English is available to almost everyone through the Internet.

The present study will continue the discussion of learning, teaching and assessing oral language skills by inspecting upper secondary school students' views on the matter. The topic of the study is motivated by the recent digitalization of the Matriculation Examination and the upcoming computer-assisted oral test in the exam as well as by the fact that students' opinions have not been studied enough.

3 MATERIAL AND METHODS

Learning, teaching and testing oral language skills is a wide area of research and has been studied increasingly in the past few decades. However, the focus of research has often been on the opinions and practices of the teachers. Therefore, there is a definite need for allowing the students to voice their opinions on the topic as well, especially when the addition of the oral test in the Matriculation Examination affects them strongly. This study aims at presenting upper secondary school students' perspectives on the teaching and assessment of oral language skills as well as on the upcoming oral test in the English Matriculation Examination. The research questions are:

1. What do upper secondary school students think of the current practices of teaching and evaluating oral skills?
2. From the students' perspective, how should oral proficiency be evaluated in the Matriculation Examination?
3. What kind of attitudes do the students have towards the computer-based oral test?

The research data was gathered via an online survey targeting upper secondary school students. The data was collected in February 2019 with a questionnaire application E-lomake. The survey consisted of 19 multiple-choice questions with separate text boxes for questions 1-15 where the respondents could clarify their opinions. This allowed the students to express themselves more freely and accurately and gave a better insight into their perspectives.

The questionnaire was divided into two parts, the first one asking the respondents' basic information and the latter one perceiving their opinions. Besides the four questions on basic information, the survey consisted of 15 Likert scale and multiple-choice questions that each included an optional open-ended question for elaborating their responses. Finally, the respondents were given an optional open-ended space for additional comments in item 16. I chose to use a questionnaire as the method for gathering data, as it is convenient for gathering data from a larger population. Additionally, using a questionnaire makes processing the data more efficient and reliable. The questionnaire was intentionally designed to be quite short, in order to receive as many responses as possible. The questionnaire was compiled in Finnish in

order to enhance the response rate, as the native tongue for most students is most likely Finnish. The responses to the survey were anonymous and could not be traced back to individual respondents.

The data was gathered through upper secondary school teachers because they could easily pass the questionnaire onto their students. An invitation to the questionnaire was posted on the Facebook page of upper secondary school teachers of English in Finland (*Englannin opettajat lukiossa*) and a total of 39 teachers were also contacted individually via email. The teachers that were contacted were randomly chosen from a list of upper secondary schools in Finland. To make the results more representative, 16 schools were chosen from 13 different cities around Finland. The teachers' contact information was gathered from the schools' webpages.

212 students participated in the study. Given the large population of the study – 103 800 upper secondary school students in 2017 (SVT 2018) –, the response rate was good, the margin of error being 6,7%. Unfortunately, the data gathering overlapped with exam week after which third-year students often do not have classes anymore. Therefore, the results consist mainly of responses from first-year and second-year students.

The chosen method for the analysis of the study involves both quantitative analysis of the Likert scale and multiple-choice questions and qualitative content analysis of the open-ended questions. The data from the open-ended questions is presented thematically with themes emerging from the responses. As there was a limited number of open-ended responses, they are categorized into themes according to my subjective interpretations. In some questions, there might be only one or two responses that make a theme while in other questions, more responses were received and, therefore, the themes consist of several similar responses. In order to avoid repetitiveness, I have chosen to exclude too many similar responses from the examples of the open-ended data listed throughout the results.

4 RESULTS

The results are presented in the order of the questionnaire and they are divided into two subsections: an overview of the respondents' basic information and an examination of the survey's results. All questions and responses are translated from Finnish into English, apart from one response in English. The original questionnaire and the open-ended responses are attached as Appendices A and B. Discussion of the results can be found in chapter 5.

4.1 Basic information

4.1.1 Year of studies

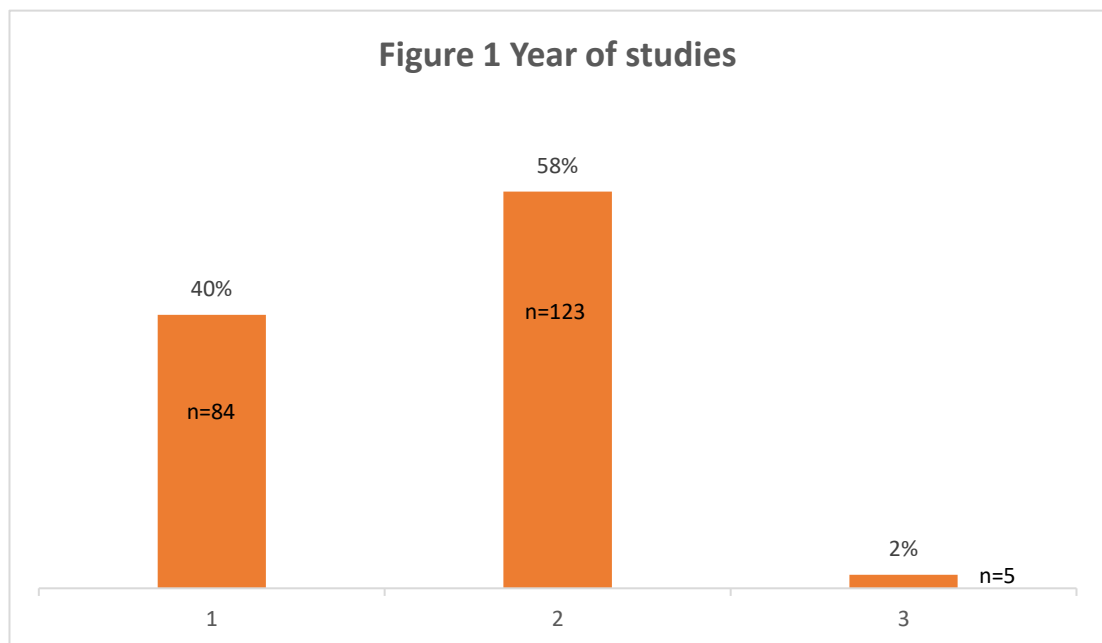


Figure 1 Year of studies

A vast majority of the respondents (58%) are second-year students in upper secondary school. 40% of the respondents were first-year students. There were only five respondents (2%) who were third-year students in upper secondary school and none who were fourth-year students.

4.1.2 Gender

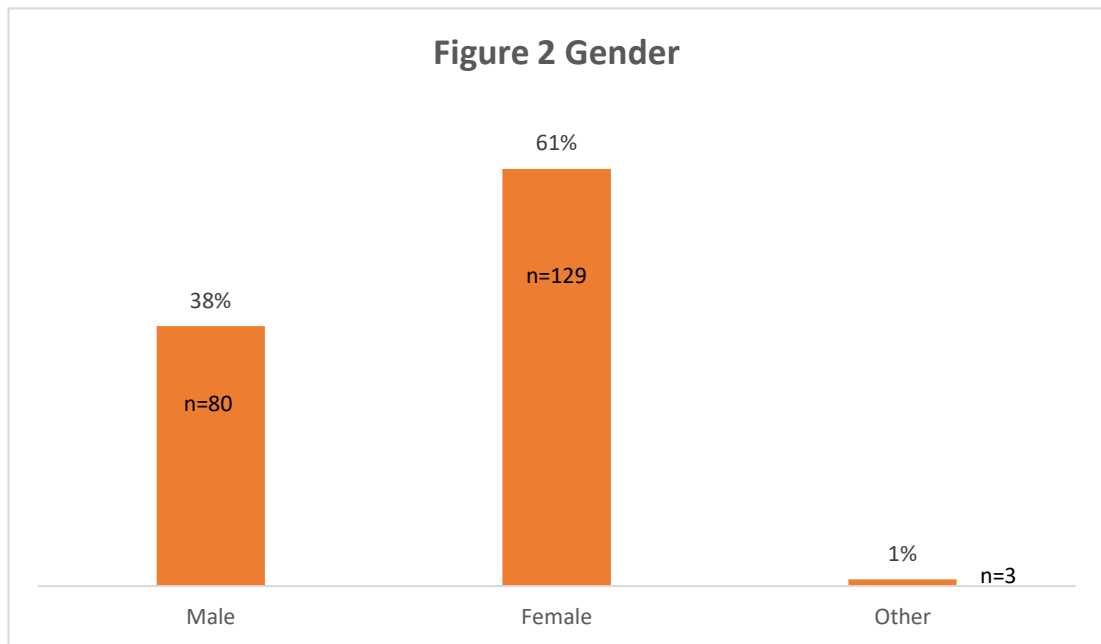


Figure 2 Gender

Over half of the respondents (61%) were female. 38% of the respondents were male and three respondents identified as 'other'.

4.1.3 Participation in the English test

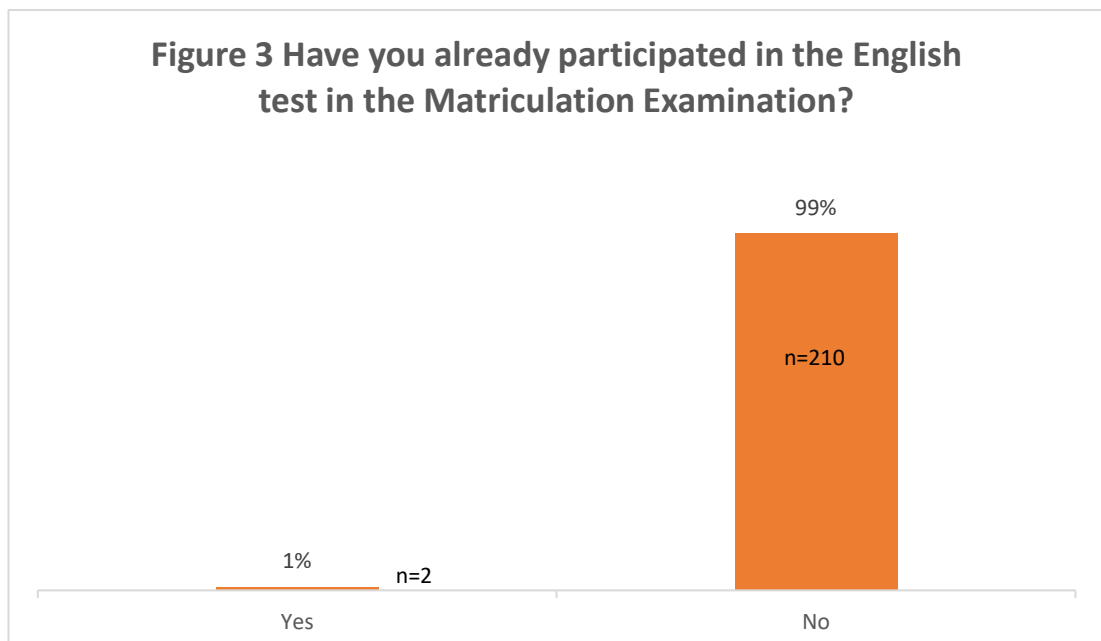


Figure 3 Participation in the English test

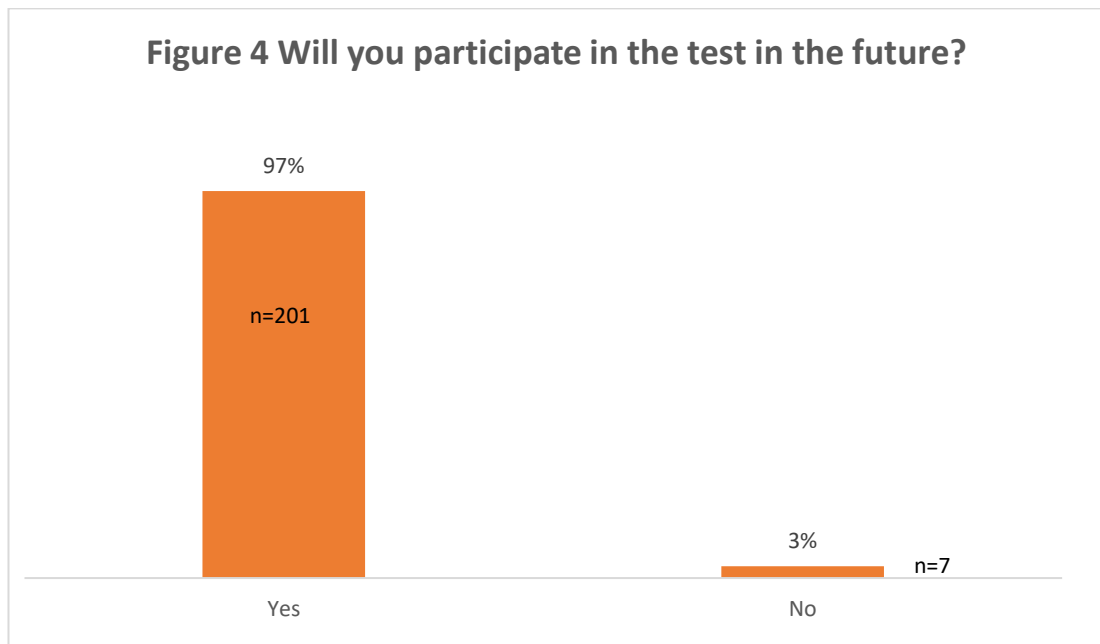


Figure 4 Participation in the English test in the future

Only two respondents had participated in the English test in the Matriculation Examination. A follow-up question was posed on those who had not yet participated in the English test. Almost all respondents (97%) were planning to participate in the test in the future, although there were seven students who responded they would not. Two students, who had chosen 'no' in the previous question, did not respond to the follow-up question.

4.2 Questionnaire results

4.2.1 Oral language exercises in the classroom

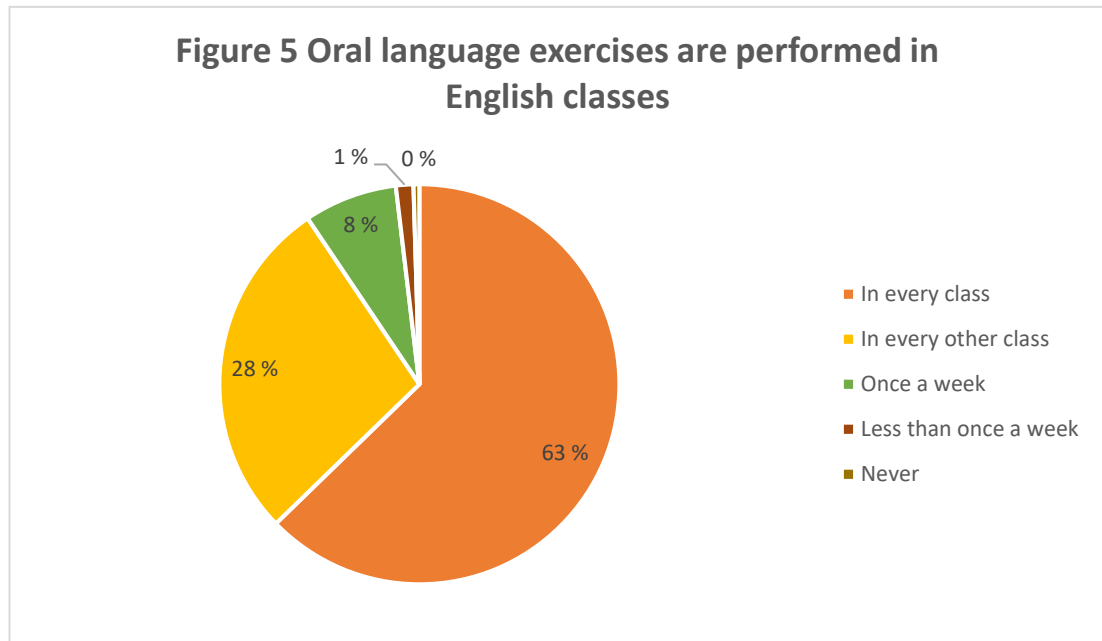


Figure 5 Frequency of oral language exercises

A majority of the students (63%) responded that oral language exercises are performed in every English class. According to 28% of the students, they are done in every other class. Eight percent responded that they did oral language exercises weekly and a small minority (1%) responded having performed them less than weekly or never. Several respondents wrote that there are at least some kind of oral exercises in nearly every English class. According to a few respondents, the amount of oral language exercises might depend on the teacher as well. Some students mentioned that because they speak in English during the classes, the classes work as oral language exercises in itself. Others listed in more detail oral language activities performed in class:

1. Almost in every class, there is pair discussion or something like that. Also, in every class the teacher asks the students about things after which someone can raise their hand and answer usually in English.
2. We might repeat words that are difficult to pronounce from the board. Sometimes we read chapters from the textbook and translate them into Finnish.
3. We perform oral pair exercises in every class at least in pair work, translating into Finnish and reading.

A few respondents also pointed out that there might not be enough time to do oral language exercises in every class:

4. Sometimes short classes go to practicing theory or checking homework.
5. Sometimes there might be classes when we do not perform them, but principally always.
6. It depends on the week, sometimes the whole class might consist of oral exercises and sometimes we perform them only about once in two weeks.

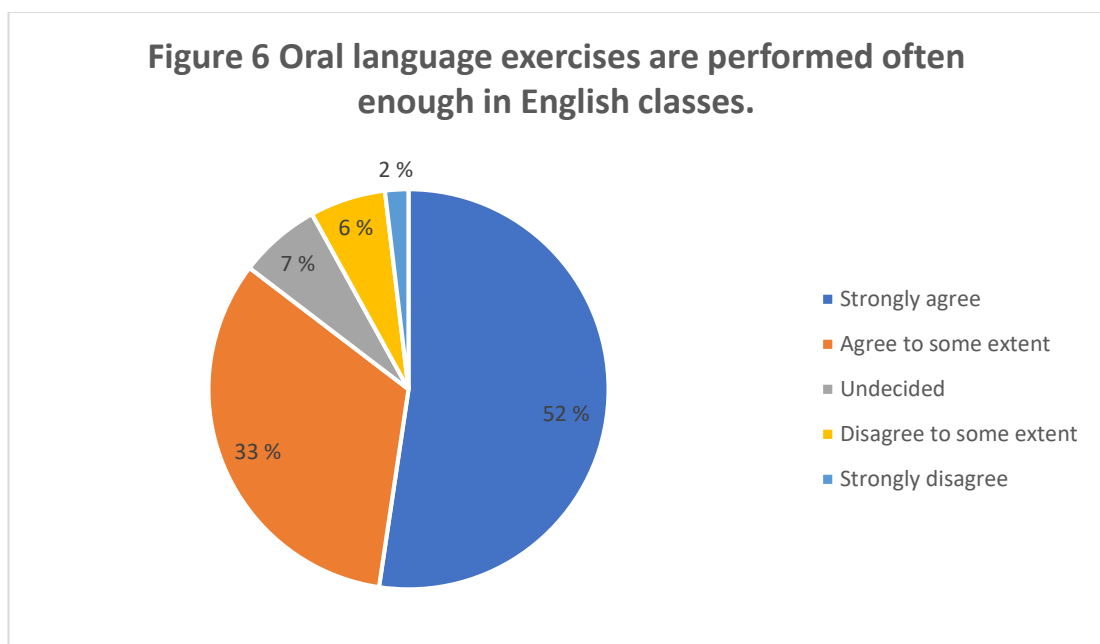


Figure 6 Sufficiency of oral language exercises

Most of the respondents (85%) agreed at least to some extent that oral language exercises are performed enough. 7% were undecided and 8% disagreed at least to some extent. A few respondents even stated that oral exercises should be performed less. However, many agreed that there should be more oral exercises:

7. I think there should be more oral exercises and teaching of oral skills.
8. Speaking in English is most likely the most important skill, if you are going to need English in your life you will need to know how to talk to other English speakers. Therefore, there could maybe be more speaking of English.
9. More would be better.

Two respondents added that students should be more eager to participate in the oral exercises:

10. If everyone would actually participate in those exercises, well then.
11. There should be more oral exercises, so that language use would be more fluent, and, in my experience, students should be more eager to cooperate so that the oral exercises would be performed and they would be beneficial.

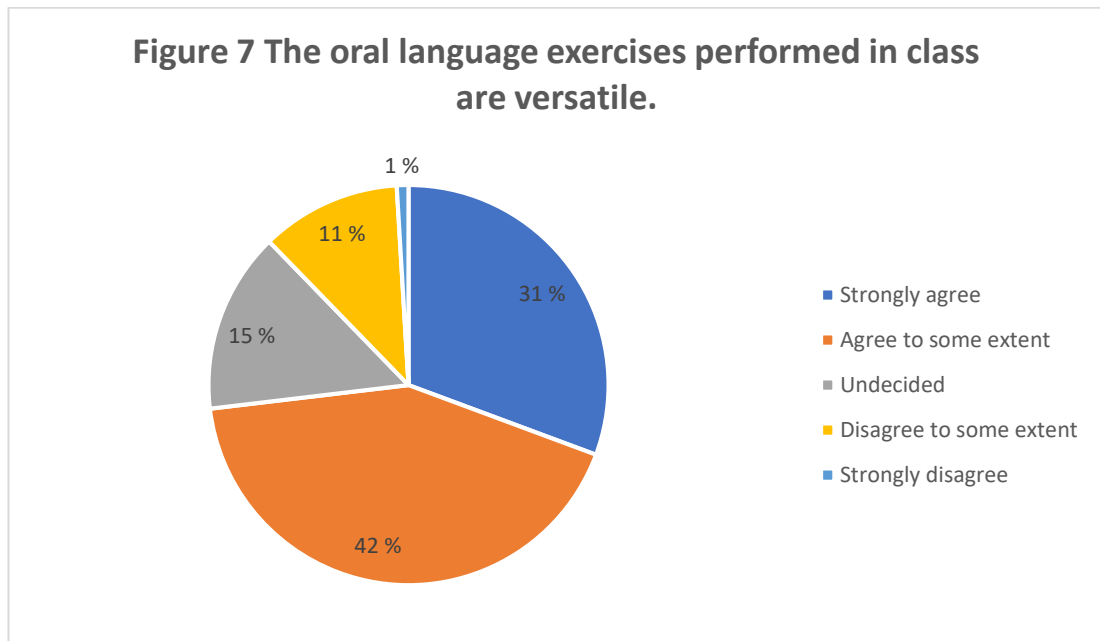


Figure 7 Versatility of oral language exercises

Almost one third of the students agreed strongly that the exercises are versatile and 42% agreed to some extent. 15% were left undecided on the matter and 26 students (12%) disagreed at least to some extent. Several students criticized the exercises for being repetitive and formal:

12. In my opinion, there could be more spontaneous discussion and not only reading aloud from the book.
13. Always only vocabulary and chapters.
14. Often the exercises are unvaried and alike. Sometimes they vary, though, but generally, they follow a certain pattern.

15. The contents of the exercises are always very similar. A asks the questions from the exercise sheet, B answers and vice versa.

One respondent agreed that the task types are very similar to each other but because the topics change, it is enough. The variedness of the exercises was also mentioned to depend on the teacher. One student wanted to bring up the stress of using the language:

16. Many may feel pressure of speaking a language, especially if you have to speak in front of the whole class.

4.2.2 Oral language use in the classroom

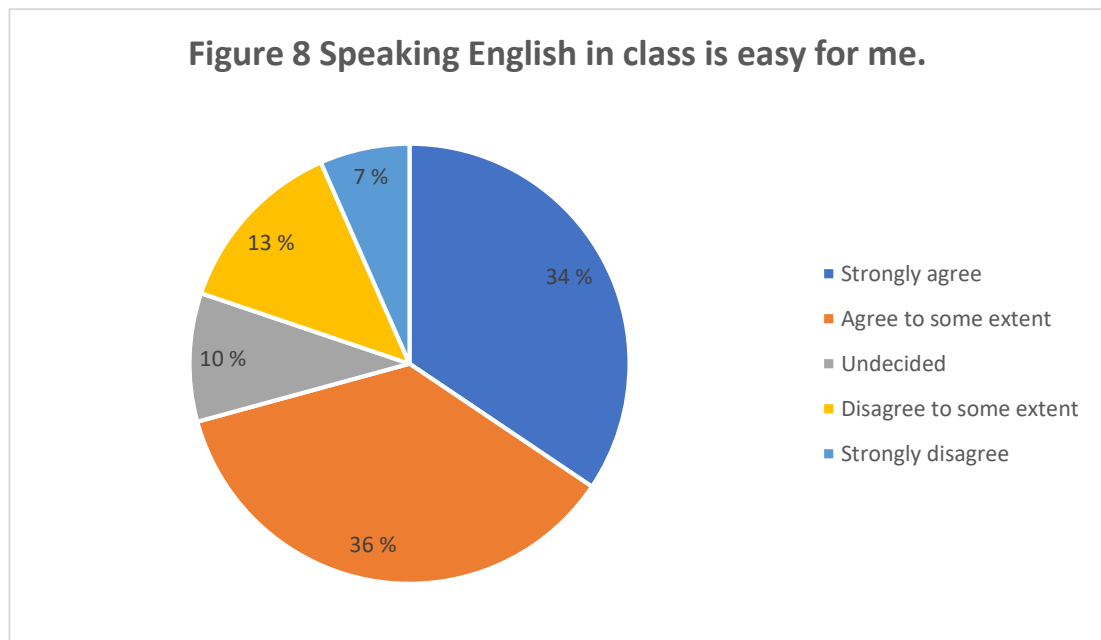


Figure 8 Easiness of speaking English in class

A vast majority of students (70%) felt that speaking English in class is easy for them. One student mentioned having used English since she was a child because her father lives abroad. Still, every fifth student disagreed at least to some extent with the claim and 10% of the respondents were undecided. Several students mentioned uncertainty and shyness as reasons why they did not consider speaking English easy for them:

17. I'm nervous of speaking in English because of my mediocre pronunciation.

18. I would like to speak more English in class, but I don't think I'm good enough and I'm afraid that I will sound bad.

19. I haven't used English much lately, so my skills, such as pronunciation, have weakened. For this reason, I'm insecure and shy.

Many mentioned specifically speaking in front of other students being difficult for them:

20. I can't pronounce, especially in front of others.

21. It depends completely on my pair. If there is a complete stranger sitting next to me, then it might be that I do not have the guts to speak basically at all.

22. Speaking English outside the classes is easy for me.

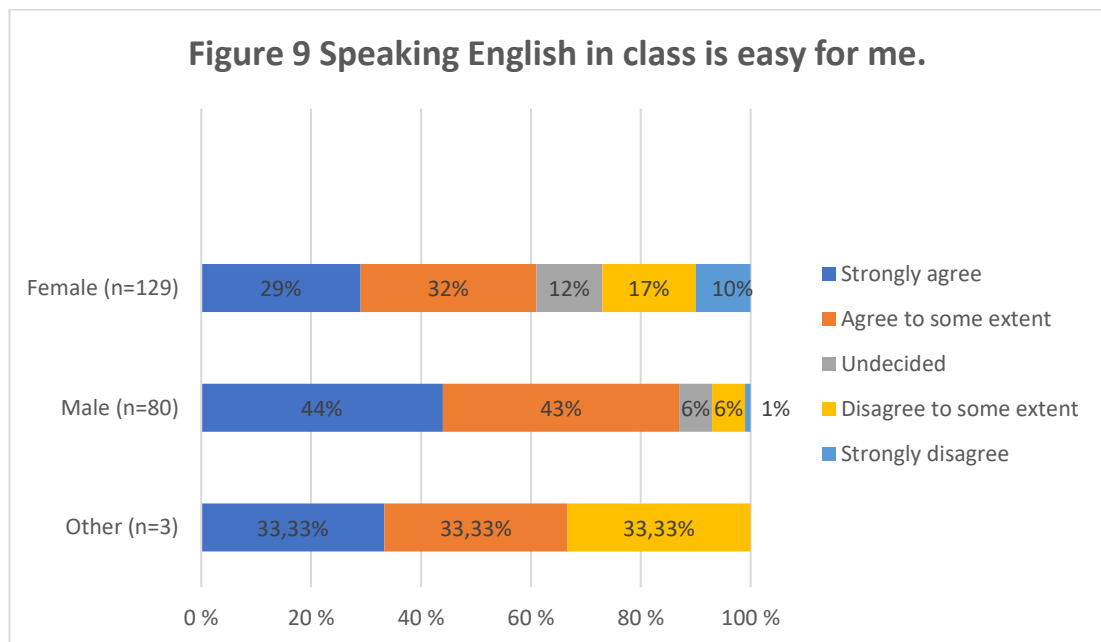


Figure 9 Compared views on the easiness of speaking English by gender

As can be seen from Figure 9, female students disagreed more often than male students did with the easiness of speaking English in class. A vast majority of male students (87%) agreed at least to some extent with the claim while only 61% of female students did so. As there were only three respondents who identified themselves as 'other', any generalizations cannot be made from their responses.

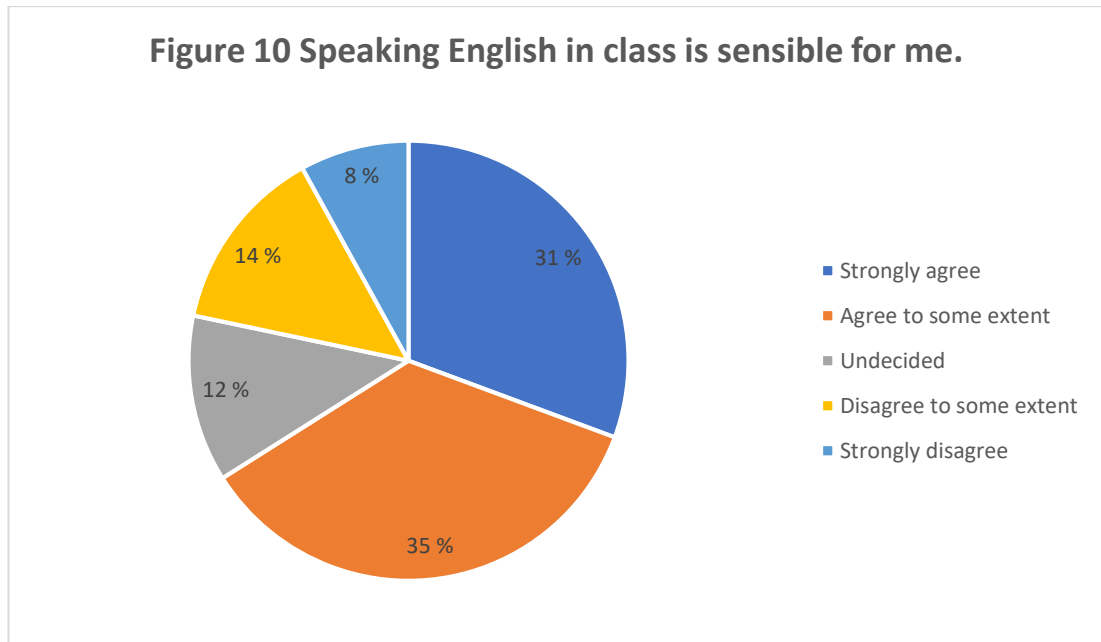


Figure 10 Sensibility of speaking English in class

The responses for the sensibility of speaking English in class are similar to the previous question on the difficulty of speaking English in class. 66% of the respondents agreed at least to some extent with the claim and 22% disagreed at least to some extent. 12% remained undecided.

However, it is noteworthy that because the Finnish word for sensible (*mielekäs*) resembles the word for pleasant (*mieluisa*), it is possible that some students have responded to the pleasantness of speaking English. This comes across from one response:

23. It's quite fun, although I sound stupid.

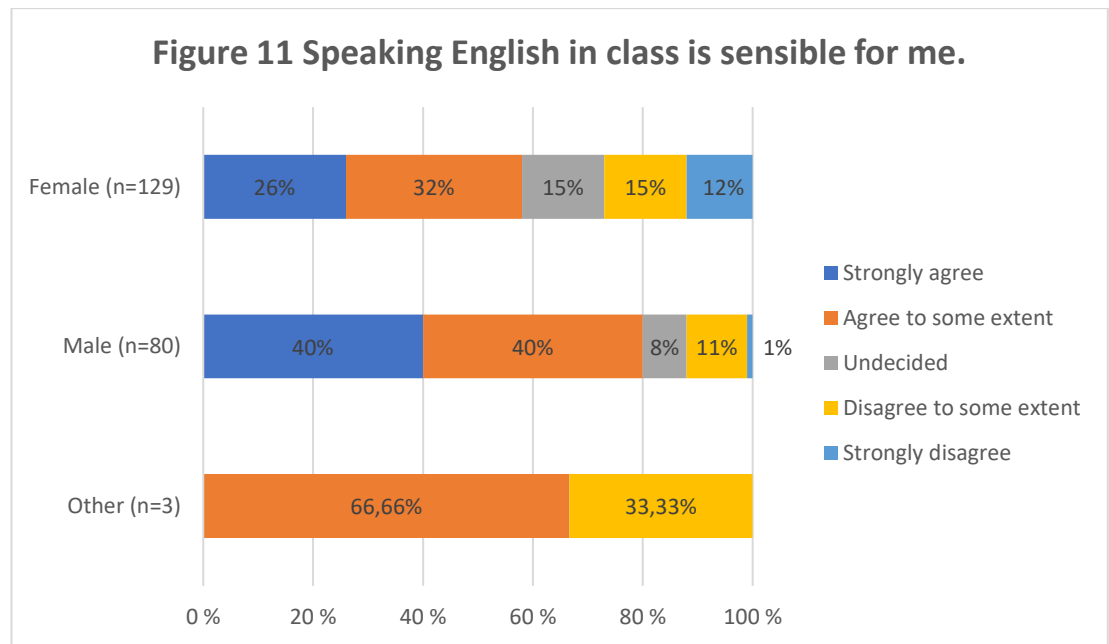


Figure 11 Compared views on the sensibility of speaking English by gender

Similar to the easiness of speaking English in class (Figure 9), Figure 11 shows that male students agreed more often than female students did with the sensibility of using English in class.

4.2.3 Importance of teaching and assessing oral language skills

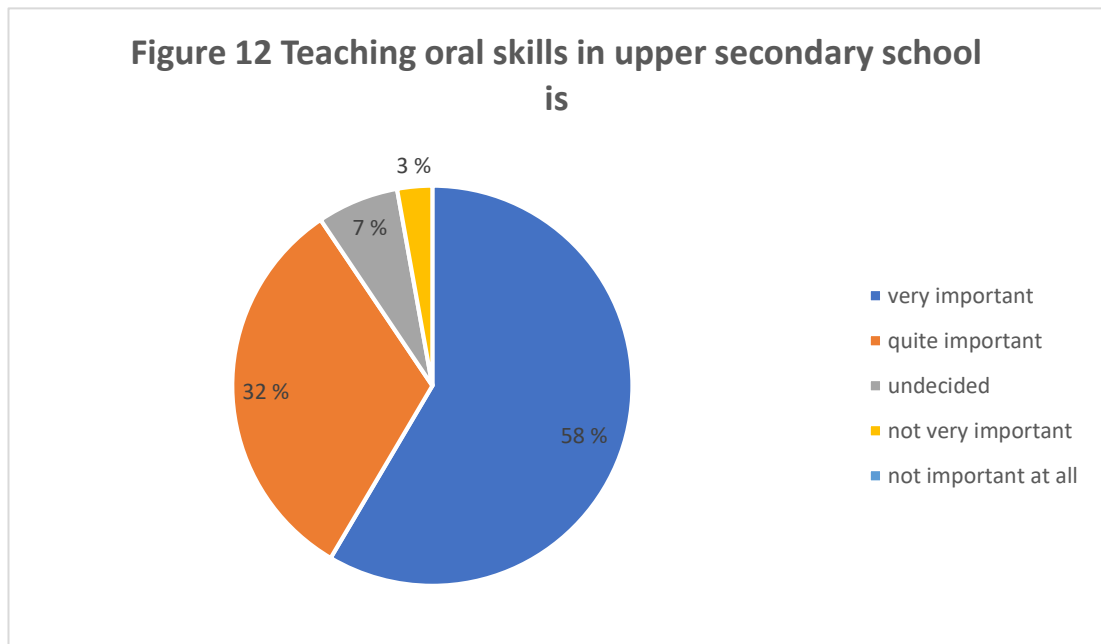


Figure 12 Importance of teaching oral skills

Over half of the respondents saw teaching oral skills in upper secondary school as very important while not one respondent considered it as not important at all. However, 7% (n=14) were undecided and 3% (n=6) saw teaching oral skills as not very important. Several students thought about the importance of spoken language skills in real life:

24. [Spoken] language proficiency is important in life, but you can manage without it as well. If your writing and comprehension are good.
25. Oral language proficiency is more important in many situations than written proficiency. For example, when you're traveling, you cannot write everything, but you need to know how to speak spontaneously.
26. Learning spoken language skills is very important because it provides the future with indispensable opportunities.
27. For life, it is very important to know how to speak a language, not just write it. Although both are important, I still think that oral proficiency is more useful.

One respondent considered it as a crucial part of language assessment:

28. In my opinion, learning spoken skills is useful so that the teacher can assess your whole knowledge of the course. Learning spoken skills also supports the pronunciation of many words.

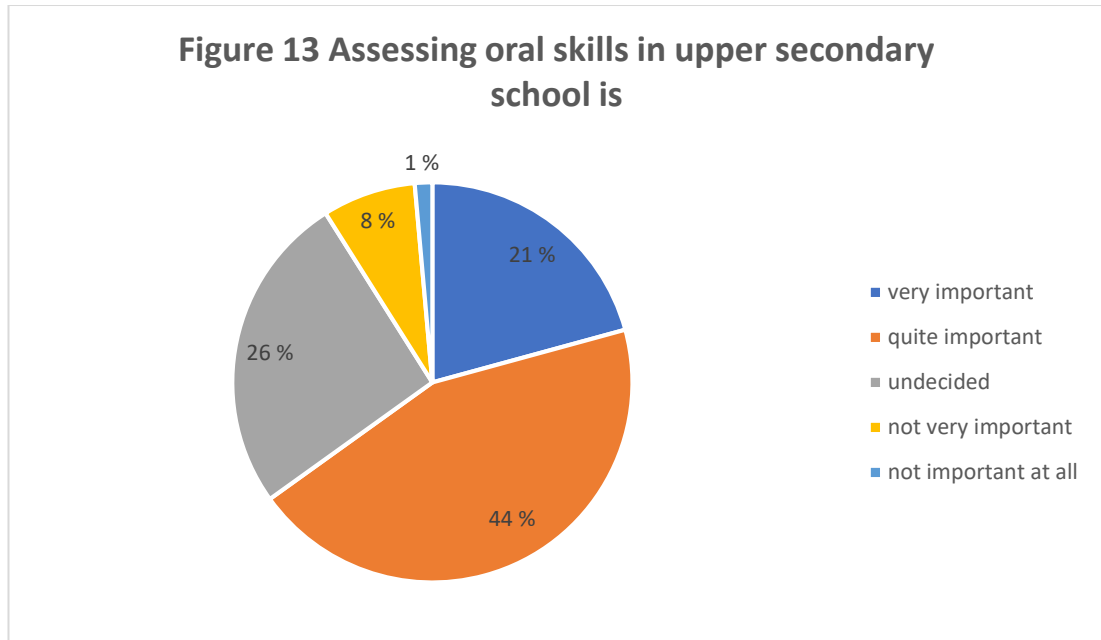


Figure 13 Importance of assessing oral skills

While 58% saw teaching oral skills as very important, only 21% of the students thought assessing oral skills to be very important. However, 44% considered it quite important and over one fourth were undecided on the topic. 9% did not agree with the importance of assessing oral skills. Because of the high rate of respondents who were undecided, it seems that the students were quite unwilling to take a stance on whether their spoken skills should be assessed or not. A few students had some ideas on how oral skills could be assessed:

29. Oral proficiency could be included generally in the grade (increases/decreases it if needed) by having an oral test, but I wouldn't want a single grade for it.
30. You could have some kind of feedback from the teacher from your performance but there shouldn't be a great emphasis on the assessment, because the student should first and foremost be left with a pleasant experience from speaking in English. Precisely, the course could aim at inspiring students to speak more English than before, now the teaching is a bit too pressuring.

31. There could be better assessment of it, but it depends a lot on the teacher of course. An oral part of the exam would be really good.

Some were more skeptic on the assessment of oral skills:

32. Some might get it easier than others, it's more important to teach it.

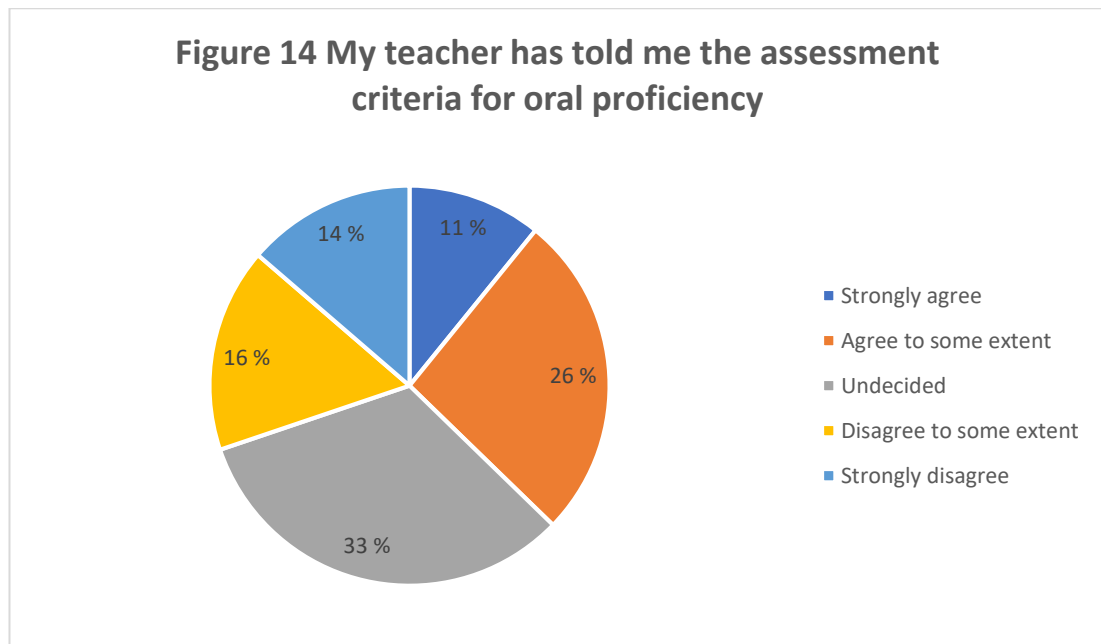


Figure 14 Assessment criteria for oral proficiency

The question about the assessment criteria received mixed responses. While 37% of the respondents agreed at least to some extent, every third student were undecided, which may suggest that they either were not sure or simply did not remember having been told about the criteria. 30% disagreed at least to some extent with being told about the criteria. Several students stated their uncertainty about the topic:

33. I don't remember being told [about the criteria].

34. The teacher has not specified the contents of assessment.

35. I don't know.

Others mentioned criteria or methods that they knew were used for assessment, including testing, in-class participation and the quality of spoken language:

- 36. Tests.
- 37. Participation and pair discussions in class.
- 38. Among other things, hearing how well we can speak, how well the pronunciation goes.
- 39. You get minus points in class if you speak Finnish.
- 40. You get to make an oral presentation, and engagement in class.
- 41. Grammar.

4.2.4 Oral language use outside the classroom

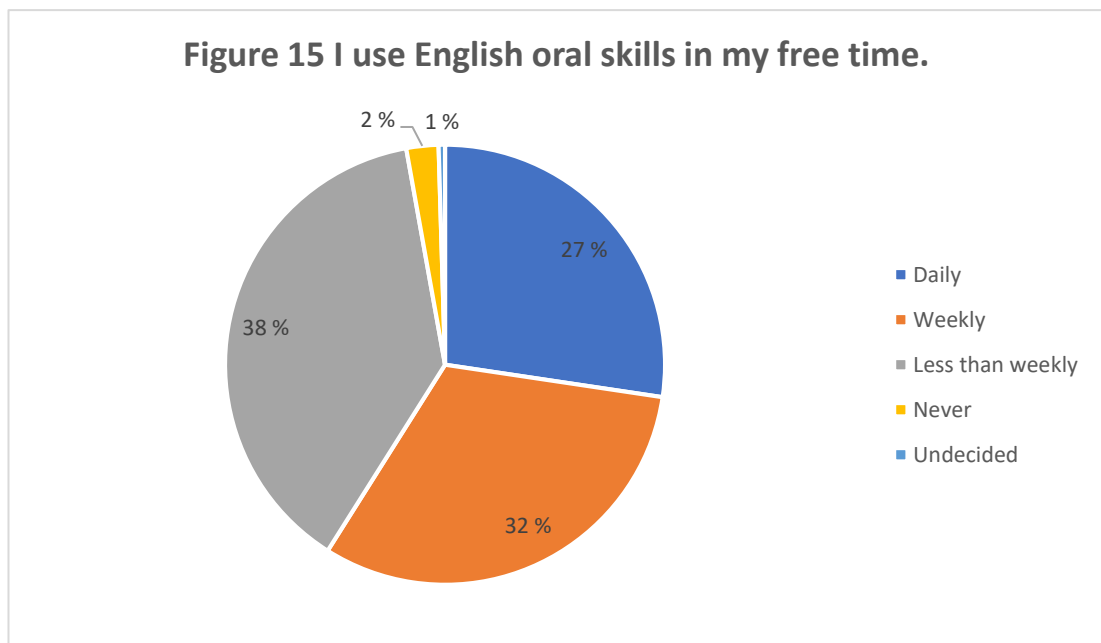


Figure 15 Using English oral skills in free time

Almost all respondents (97%) used English in their free time at least sometimes. 27% used English daily, while 32% used it weekly. A majority of the respondents (38%) used English less than weekly. The students were asked to describe the ways in which they use English in their free time. Many students responded using English with their friends or family, several of them using English with friends just for fun:

- 42. Mostly single sentences with friends.
- 43. Every now and then, we speak in English for fun with my friends.

Many responded having friends with whom they spoke mainly in English:

- 44. I talk to my English-speaking friends.
- 45. Skype with foreign friends.
- 46. My parents and I have many foreign friends.
- 47. I talk to my friend who doesn't know Finnish.

Some respondents used English with their family:

- 48. We discuss at home with my mother and my sister some things in English.
- 49. I talk to my siblings and parents sometimes in English at home. I also have a relative who speaks English so with him/her when he/she is in Finland.
- 50. We speak in English at home and with my friends.

Many students responded using English when playing games, most often online:

- 51. For example, I speak English while playing some videogames.
- 52. In practice with Russian players.
- 53. In different video games that have chat services, where there are people around the world. Any language I know, I can use it if I come across a person who speaks it. Besides English I use, for example, French.
- 54. When playing with English-speakers.

Being abroad or communicating with tourists were among the responses:

- 55. During vacations.
- 56. Only when traveling abroad.
- 57. Sometimes for example in Helsinki or abroad if someone asks something in English.
- 58. For example, guiding tourists.

Some students responded using English at work:

- 59. In international summer jobs.
- 60. At home and at work.
- 61. At work, I sometimes have to serve customers in English, and we speak English sometimes with my friends.

Several students also mentioned practicing oral skills by themselves, either while studying or otherwise:

62. I might have discussions in English, either in my head or orally. Also, often when I'm reading texts from the textbook, I practice pronunciation. I think it's nicer to do it in peace, and not when everyone is seeing and hearing you.
63. The most used way is probably to sing in English.
64. I twaddle to myself sometimes in English, if Finnish feels too difficult.

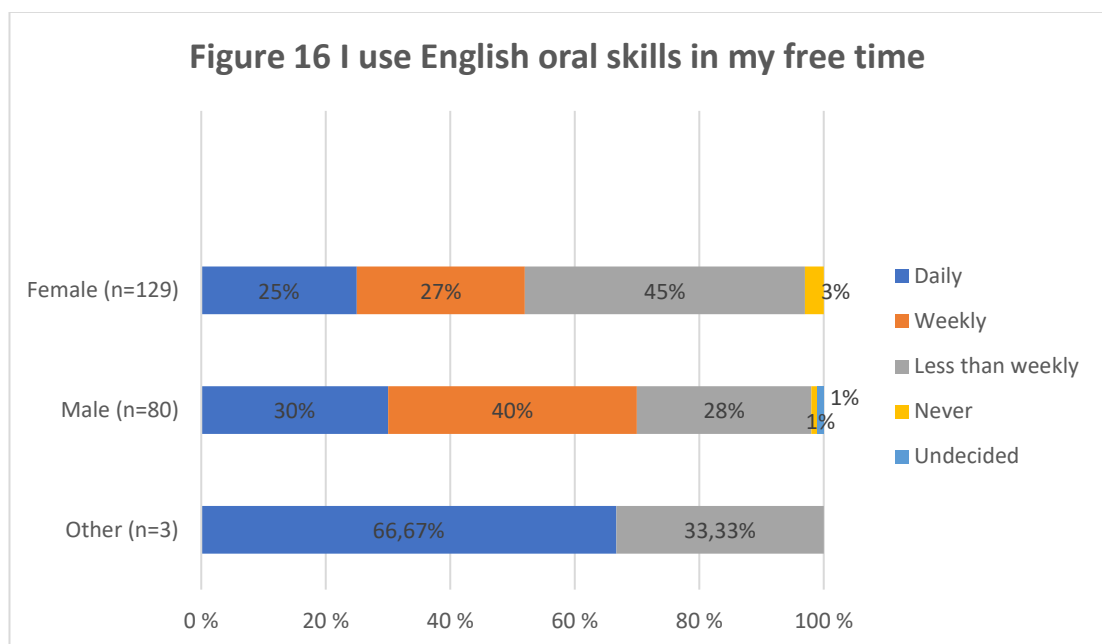


Figure 16 Compared views on using English oral skills in free time by gender

Figure 16 shows that male students responded using English more often than female students did. 70% of the male students use English at least weekly while only 52% of the female students use English as often.

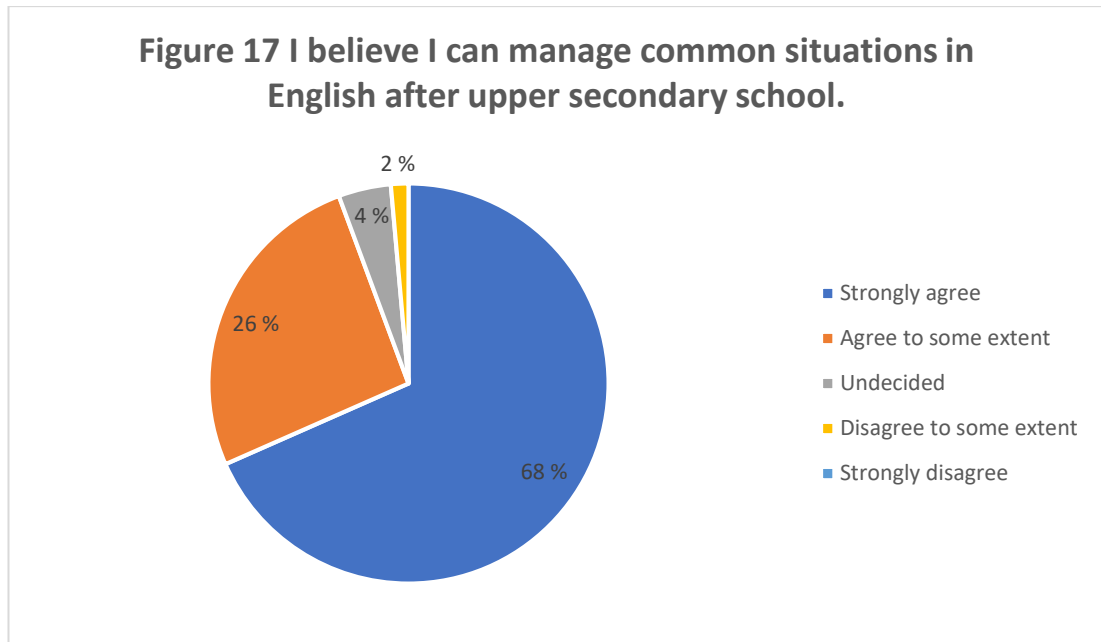


Figure 17 Managing common situations in English

Most respondents (68% strongly agreed and 26% agreed to some extent) were confident that they would manage common situations in English after upper secondary school. There were 4% (n=9) who were left undecided and three students who disagreed to some extent with the claim. However, many were quite confident about their skills:

- 65. Besides the knowledge gained in upper secondary school, I have a lot of knowledge of my own.
- 66. I think I know how to, but in a certain situation I might have a blackout [and not remember how to speak in English].
- 67. I already can.
- 68. I know how to give directions in English, which are often asked about on the street.

4.2.5 Oral test in the Matriculation Examination

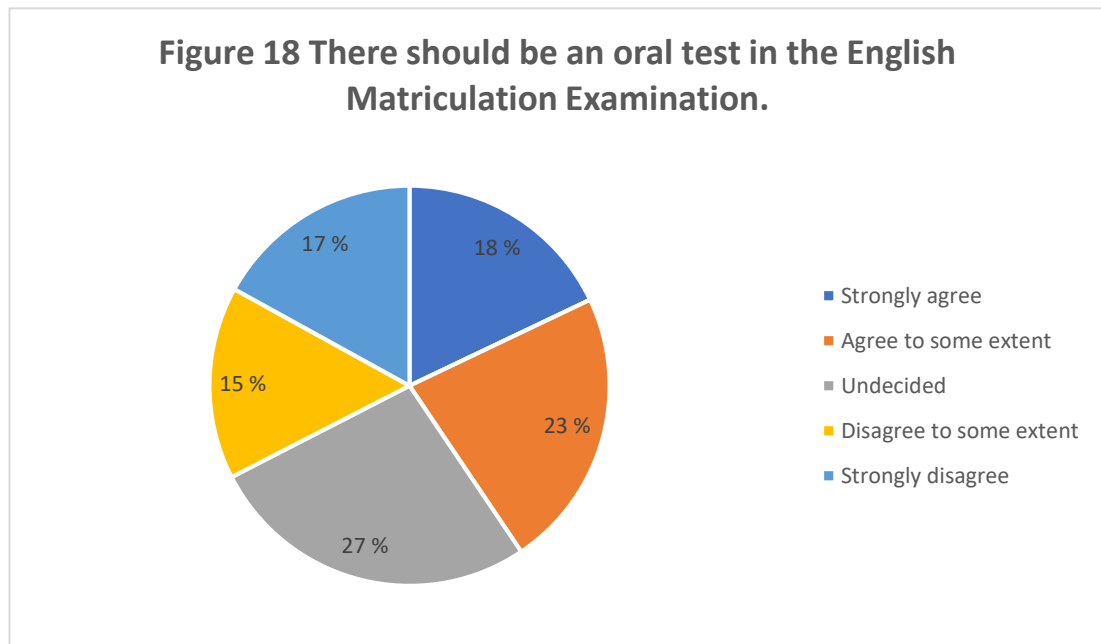


Figure 18 Oral test in the English Matriculation Examination

Similar to the question on the assessment of oral skills, the question on whether there should be an oral test in the English Matriculation Examination received mixed responses. There were almost as many respondents who strongly agreed (18%, n=38) and who strongly disagreed (17%, n=36) with the claim. A majority of the respondents (27%) were undecided. However, 41% agreed at least to some extent while 32% disagreed at least to some extent so it can be stated that students were more positive than negative towards the oral test. The claim sparked comments supporting the addition of the oral test:

69. I thought there [already] was an oral test in the Matriculation Examination!?
Definitely, and preferably by 2021 because I'm participating in the English test then.
70. An oral test could be included in the Matriculation Examination, but it should be optional and voluntary.
71. Oral proficiency is a crucial part of language proficiency, which, in my opinion, is not focused on in many languages almost at all.

A few students commented on the stressfulness of the Matriculation Examination and how the oral test would increase the already high pressure:

72. No. Speaking is not sensible for everyone especially in a test situation, which increases the pressure. Also, it is in my opinion not efficient to evaluate pronunciation, because the main thing is to be understood. One can learn grammar etc. without any problems, but some people may never be able to learn the correct pronunciation.
73. The Matriculation Examination is so stressful already as it is that oral language performance might be impossible for some people even when they think about it.

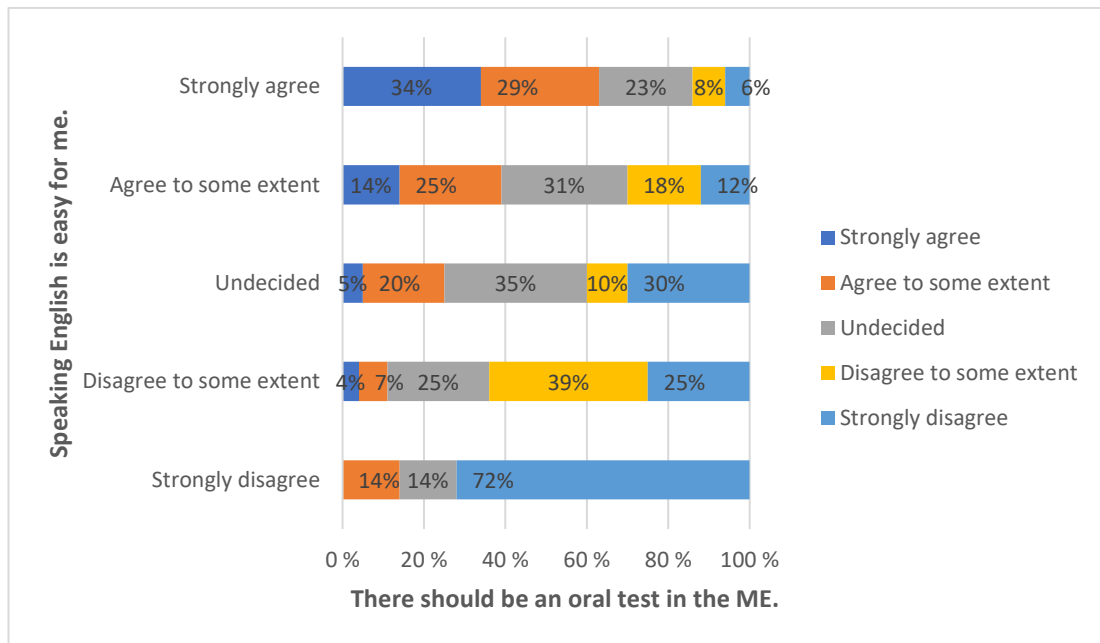


Figure 19 Compared views on adding the oral test depending on the easiness of speaking English in class

In Figure 19, we can see that the students who agreed with the claim “Speaking English in class is easy for me” would more likely think that there should be an oral test in the English Matriculation Examination (34% of them strongly agreed with adding the oral test). On the contrary, the students who disagreed strongly with the claim were strongly against adding the oral test in the Matriculation Examination (71% strongly disagreed with adding the oral test).

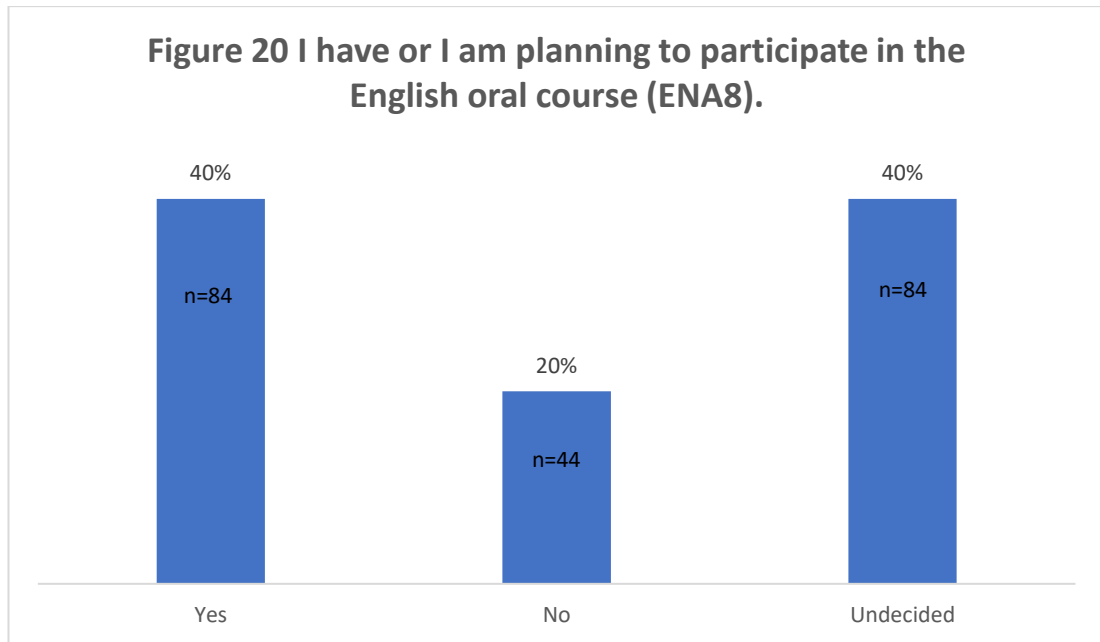


Figure 20 Participation in the English oral course

40% of the respondents had already participated or planned to participate in the English oral course. Similarly, the same number of students (40%) were still undecided. Some students were confident about their oral skills already without the course:

74. I don't feel I need to; I can speak English and other [English] courses are sufficient to maintain the skill.

Still, others felt they needed to gain courage to participate in the course:

75. If I gained more courage to my English speaking I could.

76. I want to overcome my fear of speaking English poorly and develop my language proficiency.

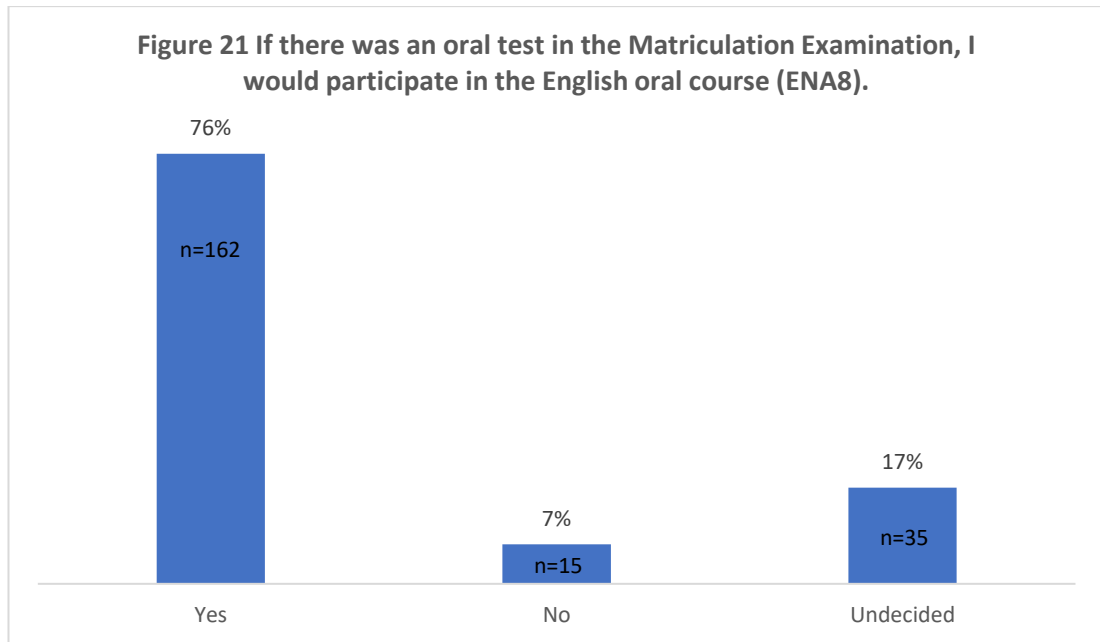


Figure 21 Participation in the oral course in case of an oral test

This time the responses for 'yes' almost double when compared to the previous question. 162 students (76%) responded that they would participate in the course ENA8 if there was an oral test in the Matriculation Examination. 35 students remained undecided and for 15 students (7%) it would make no difference. Two students clarified that they would choose the course was there an oral test or not.

4.2.6 Computer-assisted language learning and testing

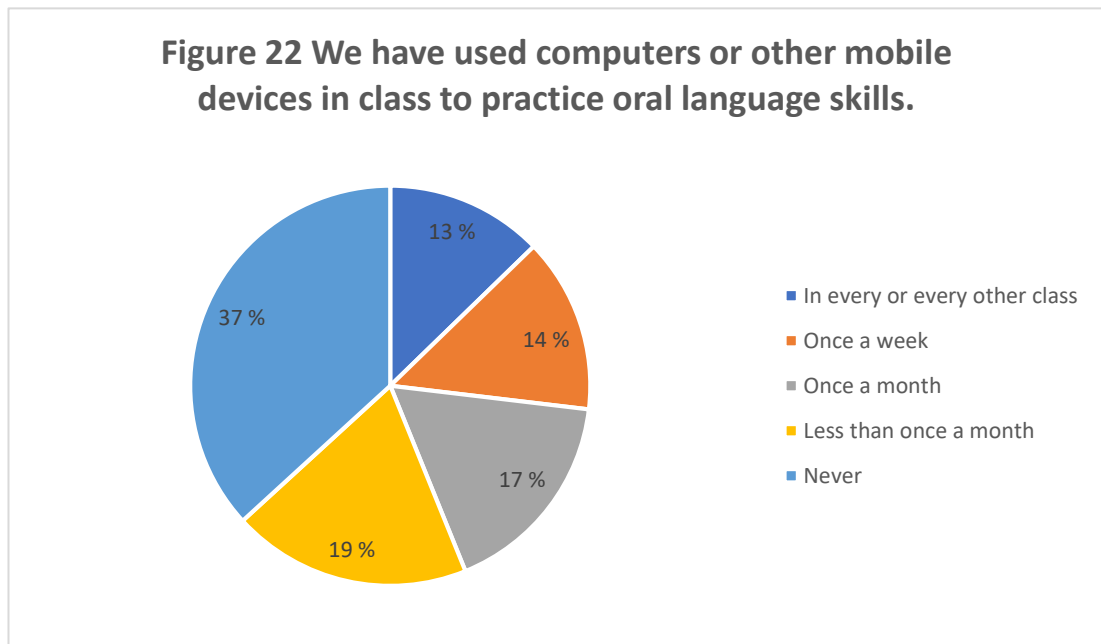


Figure 22 Using mobile devices in class to practice oral skills

Majority of the students (37%) responded having never used mobile devices in class to practice oral skills. Several students indicated their uncertainty about the topic in the open-ended part of the question, one student expressing disbelief on how it could be done:

77. It's hard to evaluate.

78. I'm not sure.

79. I don't know, how is it even possible?

80. The course has only just begun, so it's hard to answer this [question].

Figure 23 The teaching of English in upper secondary school prepares students for the digital Matriculation Examination.

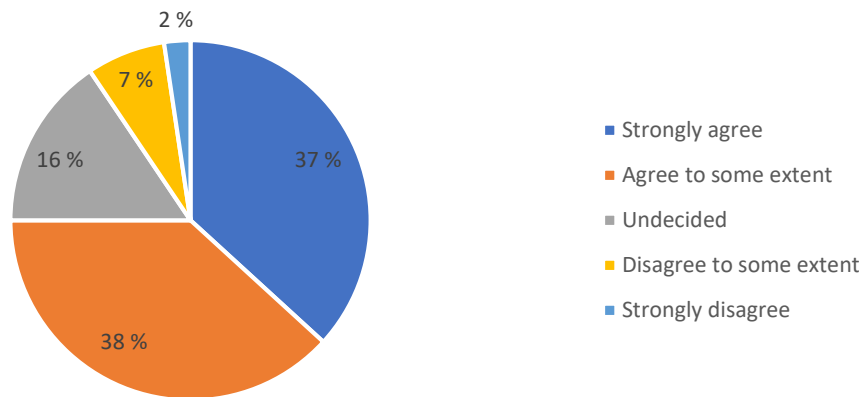


Figure 23 Preparing students for the digital Matriculation Examination

75% of the students agreed at least to some extent that they are prepared for the digital exam at the end of upper secondary school. One respondent argued that at least most of the tests are digital today. Still, 16% were undecided and 9% disagreed at least to some extent. Either the respondents did not have much experience using computers in class or they felt that the exercises performed weren't helpful for the Matriculation Examination:

81. We haven't used computers much.

82. In my opinion, we do too many exercises that don't help much in the Matriculation Examination.

4.2.7 Other comments

In the last question item, the students were given space to comment on, for example, the teaching and assessment of oral skills, the Matriculation Examination for English and the survey. Some students used to space to express their opinion on whether there should be an oral test or not:

83. No oral [test] for the Matriculation Examination, thank you.

84. Oral assessment would only be a small part of the Matriculation Examination!

Others wished for more teaching of oral skills, especially if there is an oral part in the Matriculation Examination:

85. There should be more oral exercises! And not only reading sentences from a paper but [creating] your own sentences, free discussion on a topic!
86. I think there would always be benefit for teaching the students more of the speaking side of English. Because you can't never speak too much. Speaking benefits the learning aspect. I basically learned all my English just by listening and speaking. (english)
87. If there will be an oral part in the Matriculation Examination, oral exercises should be performed even more, and more variably in the classes.

Now that I have presented the results of the study, it is time to move on to the discussion of the results.

5 DISCUSSION

The goal of this study was to present upper secondary school students' views on teaching and assessing oral language skills and on the upcoming oral test in the Matriculation Examination for English. The following subsections discuss each of the three research questions separately. Section 5.1 focuses on the students' perceptions of the current practices of teaching and evaluating oral skills in upper secondary school. Section 5.2 deals with the students' views on testing oral proficiency in the Matriculation Examination. Lastly, in section 5.3 I will discuss computer-based oral testing and the students' attitudes towards it. In the end of the discussion, I will consider the limitations of the study and give suggestions for further research.

5.1 What do upper secondary school students think of the current practices of teaching and evaluating oral skills?

According to the students' responses, oral language exercises are performed quite often, as the National Curriculum and the CEFR instruct. A vast majority of the students responded that oral language exercises are performed in every or every other class. The students listed, for example, pair work, translating, reading and pronunciation as ways they practice oral skills in class. However, lack of time was mentioned as a reason why oral skills might not be practiced in every class or not even every week. A similar finding was made in Kemiläinen (2018: 38), as upper secondary school teachers reported that lack of time made teaching oral skills in every class challenging.

Another interesting finding from the present study was the lack of students' motivation. Although most students agreed that oral language exercises are performed often enough, it was also reported that students do not always participate in those exercises. Similarly, teachers saw students' lack of motivation to complicate teaching oral skills (Kemiläinen 2018; Kaski-Akhawan 2013; Huuskonen & Kähkönen 2006). What makes the findings even more interesting is that, in several previous studies, students have been shown to have a high motivation to practice oral language skills (see e.g. Ahola-Houtsonen 2013; Mäkelä 2005; Yli-Renko 1991). The influence of the Matriculation Examination could be to blame, for not all students might see the usefulness of practicing oral skills when they are not tested in the Matriculation

Examination. Also, most students were confident they would manage common situations in English after upper secondary school, which might indicate that they feel they already know how to use English well enough for their daily lives.

When asked about the versatility of oral language exercises, several students called for exercises that would be more communicative. In the activities listed by the students, there were examples of both open-ended and structured task-types (Luoma 2004). However, many mentioned the excessive amount of AB-exercises, in which the students perform a dialogue with their pair by student A asking a question, student B responding and vice versa. AB-exercises are a good example of a structured oral task, which are useful in some situations but should not be the only task type that is used. If we look at the list of examples that Harmer (2007: 348-353) gives for communicative oral activities, it seems that teaching oral skills could often use more varied activities. Discussions, communication games, simulation or other types of activities provoking communication between students naturally could increase the students' communicative proficiency as well as their motivation to participate in the activities.

Although most students agree with the importance of teaching oral language skills, for many speaking in class might not be as simple as for others. Uncertainty, shyness and the fear of making mistakes were among the reasons why students felt anxious about speaking in a foreign language. An interesting finding of the present study was that female students were less likely to consider speaking English in class easy than male students did. A similar finding has been made in previous studies (Ahola-Houtsonen 2013; Mäkelä 2005; Yli-Renko 1991), which have reported girls to be more uncertain about speaking in a foreign language than boys. As language anxiety might affect both the students' performance and their attitudes towards learning a foreign language (Hewitt & Stephenson 2012; Phillips 1992), it was not surprising that female students saw speaking English in class also less sensible than male students did.

What might affect to female students being more anxious about speaking English than male students, is that female students reported using English in their free time less than male students, most of them using it less than weekly. Vidgren (2014) and Ahola-Houtsonen (2013) have come to a similar conclusion that male students used more English in their free time than female students did. Overall, students in the present study reported using English with their friends and family – with Finnish-speaking

friends for fun and with English-speaking friends for communicating –, when playing games, while traveling, at work and sometimes by themselves to practice in peace. It appears from the open-ended responses that male students used English more often when they were online and female students used it more for face-to-face communication.

It seems that both from the students' and from the teachers' point of view, assessing oral skills is quite problematic. The students in this study were divided on the matter and many were undecided. Only one fifth of the students saw assessing oral skills as very important and a few students commented that oral proficiency should not be emphasized in the assessment, but the teacher should rather give feedback to the students. According to the students, assessment was based on, for example, testing, in-class participation and the correctness of spoken language. However, many students were unsure of the criteria used for assessing oral proficiency. In the National Core Curriculum (2015) the assessment criteria are the same for both oral and written proficiency, consisting of "versatile feedback [...] at the different stages of the learning process in all courses" (p. 115). The assessment criteria in the national curriculum is quite vague and uses the Evolving Language Proficiency Scale as support for assessment when applicable, which might lead to teachers' versatile ways of assessing their students.

In previous studies, teachers have found assessing oral skills difficult because of large group sizes and lack of time (Kemiläinen 2018; Huuskonen & Kähkönen 2006). In addition, a great number of teachers considered the assessment criteria unclear and felt that they needed more training in teaching, testing and assessing oral skills (Kemiläinen 2018: 41). It is no wonder, then, that also the students are uncertain of the criteria. In order to teach and assess oral skills equally in all schools, it is crucial that both teachers and students learn about the assessment criteria. It remains to be seen how the oral test in the Matriculation Examination will affect the current practices, although, in any case, more training to the teachers and making the criteria more transparent to the students would be necessary in order to improve the situation.

5.2 From the students' perspective, how should oral proficiency be evaluated in the Matriculation Examination?

As most of the respondents were first- and second-year students, it was no surprise that many of them had not yet participated in the Matriculation Examination. What was surprising was that there were seven students who were not planning to participate in the English test in the future either. Reasons for not participating remain unknown as none of the students clarified reasons for their decision not to take the English test, but they might be, for example, having another A-language or taking advanced mathematics instead. In 2018, 1.5% (n=30 365) of students graduating from upper secondary school that year had not participated in any foreign language test in the Matriculation Examination, excluding Swedish as the second national language (Ylioppilastutkintolautakunta 2019).

Adding an oral test in the Matriculation Examination for English sparked controversial responses from the students. Although there were students supporting the oral test, several students were strongly against it. When comparing to previous studies about students, the results are similar (Tarvainen 2014; Mäkelä 2005; Yli-Renko 1991). Previous studies presenting teachers' views have also given similar results, as teachers divided into for and against the oral test (Kemiläinen 2018; Huuskonen & Kähkönen 2006). Teachers' reasons for not adding the test included skepticism about the practicalities of implementing the test and worry that it might increase the students' already high pressure (ibid.). The students' views were in line with the teachers' responses, as they commented on the stressfulness of the Matriculation Examination and the difficulty of speaking in a testing situation. An interesting finding was that the willingness to add an oral test in the Matriculation Examination appeared to depend on how easy students reported speaking English in class to be. In other words, the students who enjoyed speaking English, and that way could benefit from the oral test, were also more eager to participate in it.

The wash-back effect of the Matriculation Examination can be seen in the students' responses to participating in the English oral course now, and in case of an oral test in the Matriculation Examination. When responding to the survey, only 40% had or were planning to participate in the course. However, when answering to the follow-up question about participating in the oral course if there was an oral test in the

Matriculation Examination, 76% gave a positive response. This indicates that students reinforce the wash-back effect with their course choices. Furthermore, in the section for other comments, one student commented that if there will be an oral test, then oral exercises should be performed more, and their variability should be better. This comment is in line with the students' responses in Yli-Renko (1991) where they wished to practice more oral skills if an oral test was included in the Matriculation Examination. In previous studies about teachers, teaching oral skills was generally seen in a positive light and teachers were aware of the positive effect that the oral test might have on the teaching of oral skills (see e.g. Kemiläinen 2018; Kaski-Akhawan 2013; Huuskonen & Kähkönen 2006). However, teachers had similar reasons with the students to be cautious about adding the oral test, including increasing workload and higher pressure (Kemiläinen 2018; Kaski-Akhawan 2013).

The results of this study imply that students are in a situation where they understand the importance of oral skills in their lives after upper secondary school, but, at the same time, feel they have to focus on practicing the skills needed in the Matriculation Examination and choose their courses accordingly. As the grades achieved from the Matriculation Examination will matter even more in the future when applying to higher education (Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö 2017b), the pressure is high for both students and teachers to concentrate on things that are tested in the Matriculation Examination. Thus, including the oral test in the Matriculation Examination would likely increase the students' communicative competence and motivation to practice oral skills. In order to help all kinds of learners to succeed in the test, teachers need to encourage their students to produce spoken language early on in the classroom. This way, speaking a foreign language might not feel so terrifying later in a testing situation.

5.3 What kind of attitudes do the students have towards the computer-based oral test?

It appears from the students' responses that most of them were not familiar with using mobile devices in class to practice oral skills. While there were responses stating that mobile devices are used in every or every other class, over half of the students responded to have used mobile devices for this purpose less than once a month or never. The results may be caused partly by lack of experience, as a large proportion of the respondents were first-year students. Many students did not know how to answer

the question and one student questioned the possibility of practicing oral skills with a mobile device. Even so, most students agreed that the teaching in upper secondary school prepares them for the digital Matriculation Examination. It seems that the students were only considering the exam as it is at the moment but did not think that the oral part would also be digital.

In a previous study by Kemiläinen (2018), teachers were concerned about the computer-assisted oral test because it lacks authentic face-to-face interaction. In the present study, students did not raise concerns about the digital implementation of the oral test but more about the oral test in general. It is possible that not having experience of this kind of a test makes it difficult for the students to question it. Also, although the school environment has not yet caught up with the digital prospects of oral language teaching, many students do use mobile devices to communicate in a foreign language in their free time. This comes across from their responses to the use of English in their free time. Online games, Skype and social media among others give them opportunities to practice their oral skills without having to meet in person. What makes the oral test in the Matriculation Examination different, however, is that the students would have to communicate with a computer instead of a person. For many of the students suffering from language anxiety when having to speak in front of others, this might be a relief, but according to Luoma (2004), speaking to a recorder might cause another type of anxiety when one cannot express themselves in other ways than vocally. As no one really knows yet what the computer-assisted oral test will be like, many questions remain unanswered for the moment. I will now move on to the limitations of the study and suggestions for further research in this field of study.

5.4 Limitations of the study and suggestions for further research

The present study contains several limitations. Although the participation rate was rather good, more responses from third-year students would have made the results more generalizable and could have offered valuable insight from students who have already taken the English Matriculation Examination. What might slightly distort the results of the study is the first-year students' possible lack of experience about the teaching and assessment practices for English in upper secondary school. Moreover, in several open-ended questions, there were not many students who expressed their opinions and if they did, their answers were often relatively short. More numerous and

longer responses would have made the quantitative data more reliable. In addition, interpreting qualitative data is always subjective and, therefore, the analyses in the study might have been different with another researcher.

As the oral test is still on its way, there are numerous opportunities for further research on this field. Closer inspection on how oral language skills are taught and learned before and after the implementation of the oral test would be an interesting topic to study. Also, further research on using mobile devices to practice oral language skills and their effects on oral proficiency would be of use even before including the oral test in the English Matriculation Examination.

6 CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this study was to contribute to the discussion of teaching and assessing oral language skills in upper secondary schools in Finland. The study focused on upper secondary school students' perceptions on the current practices of teaching and assessing oral skills and the upcoming computer-based oral test in the Matriculation Examination. The data was gathered using a questionnaire for upper secondary school students. 212 students responded to the questionnaire and both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to analyze the data. The study had three main research questions that were used as help to divide the results into three parts as well. Next, I will provide a brief summary of the results.

The first research question aimed at shedding light to upper secondary school students' thoughts on current practices of teaching and evaluating oral skills. The results of the study imply that students are generally positive towards the teaching of oral skills and acknowledge its importance to their education. However, lack of time, lack of students' motivation and the limited amount of versatility in the oral exercises were brought up as factors that could still be improved. The second research question focused on evaluating oral proficiency in the Matriculation Examination. Although students are more positive than negative towards adding the oral test, many are worried about the increasing pressure of the Matriculation Examination and the difficulty of speaking in a testing situation. In line with previous research about teachers, students acknowledge the wash-back effect of the Matriculation Examination as teaching tends to focus on skills tested in the exam. Moreover, students seem to take part in the wash-back effect by choosing their courses and focusing on aspects of language according to their usefulness in the Matriculation Examination. The final research question aimed attention at the computer-assisted oral test. Despite the unfamiliarity of using mobile devices to practice oral skills, most students agree that the teaching in upper secondary school prepares them for the digital Matriculation Examination.

This study has given upper secondary school students an opportunity to express their opinions on the teaching and assessment of oral skills before the implementation of the oral test in the Matriculation Examination. When more information will be gained about the oral test and the time of its implementation, it will most likely have a profound effect on teaching and learning oral skills. Being computer-based, both

teachers and students need training in the new digital settings and task types that come with it. After the implementation of the test, students will ideally be taught how to succeed in the oral test. Furthermore, and most importantly, they will learn more about communicating successfully in real life.

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Appendices

Appendix A. Questionnaire

Kysely suullisen kielitaidon opetuksesta ja arvioinnista lukiossa

Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö on linjannut, että aikaisintaan vuonna 2022 englannin ylioppilaskokeeseen lisätään suullinen osio, jota nyt valmistellaan. Tämä kysely kartoittaa lukio-opiskelijoiden tämänhetkisiä kokemuksia englannin suullisen kielitaidon opetuksesta ja arvioinnista. Lisäksi kyselyn päämääränä on selvittää opiskelijoiden näkemyksiä englannin ylioppilaskokeesta ja siihen suunnitteilla olevasta suullisesta osasta.

Kyselyyn vastaaminen vie noin 10 minuuttia. Vastaukset käsitellään ehdottoman luottamuksellisesti ja siten, ettei yksittäistä vastaajaa voida niistä tunnistaa.

Pohjatiedot

Vuosikurssi

Ensimmäinen

Toinen

Kolmas

Neljäs

Sukupuoli

Mies

Nainen

Muu

Oletko jo kirjoittanut englannin ylioppilaskokeessa?

Kyllä

En

Mikäli vastasit aiempaan kysymykseen ”en”, aiotko kirjoittaa englannin ylioppilaskokeessa?

Kyllä

En

Kysely

Vastatessasi kysymyksiin ajattele tavallista englannin kielen oppituntia (ei siis suullista kielitaitoa painottavia oppitunteja tai kursseja).

1. Kuinka usein oppitunneilla tehdään suullisia harjoituksia?

Joka tunti

Joka toinen tunti

Kerran viikossa

Harvemmin kuin kerran viikossa

Ei koskaan

Halutessasi voit tarkentaa vastaustasi tähän:

2. Mielestäni suullisia harjoituksia tehdään riittävästi oppitunneilla.

Täysin samaa mieltä

Jonkin verran samaa mieltä

En osaa sanoa

Jonkin verran eri mieltä

Täysin eri mieltä

Halutessasi voit tarkentaa vastaustasi tähän:

3. Mielestäni suullisen kielitaidon tehtävät oppitunneilla ovat monipuolisia.

Täysin samaa mieltä

Jonkin verran samaa mieltä

En osaa sanoa

Jonkin verran eri mieltä

Täysin eri mieltä

Halutessasi voit tarkentaa vastaustasi tähän:

4. Englannin puhuminen oppitunnilla on minulle helppoa.

Täysin samaa mieltä

Jonkin verran samaa mieltä

En osaa sanoa

Jonkin verran eri mieltä

Täysin eri mieltä

Halutessasi voit tarkentaa vastaustasi tähän:

5. Englannin puhuminen oppitunnilla on minulle mielekästä.

Täysin samaa mieltä

Jonkin verran samaa mieltä

En osaa sanoa

Jonkin verran eri mieltä

Täysin eri mieltä

Halutessasi voit tarkentaa vastaustasi tähän:

6. Pidän suullisen kielitaidon opetusta lukiossa

Erittäin tärkeänä

Melko tärkeänä

En osaa sanoa

En kovin tärkeänä

En ollenkaan tärkeänä

Halutessasi voit tarkentaa vastaustasi tähän:

7. Pidän suullisen kielitaidon arviointia lukiossa

Erittäin tärkeänä

Melko tärkeänä

En osaa sanoa

En kovin tärkeänä

En ollenkaan tärkeänä

Halutessasi voit tarkentaa vastaustasi tähän:

8. Olen saanut tiedon opettajaltani siitä, millä perusteilla suullista kielitaitoa arvioidaan oppitunneilla.

Täysin samaa mieltä

Jonkin verran samaa mieltä

En osaa sanoa

Jonkin verran eri mieltä

Täysin eri mieltä

Nimeä jokin tietämäsi arviointiperuste.

9. Käytän englannin suullista kielitaitoa vapaa-ajalla.

Päivittäin

Viikoittain

Harvemmin

En koskaan

En osaa sanoa

Miten? Kerro ainakin yksi tapa.

10. Uskon selviäväni arkisista tilanteista suullisesti englannin kielellä lukion jälkeen.

Täysin samaa mieltä

Jonkin verran samaa mieltä

En osaa sanoa

Jonkin verran eri mieltä

Täysin eri mieltä

Halutessasi voit tarkentaa vastaustasi tähän:

11. Englannin ylioppilaskokeeseen tulisi lisätä suullisen kielitaidon koe.

Täysin samaa mieltä
Jonkin verran samaa mieltä
En osaa sanoa
Jonkin verran eri mieltä
Täysin eri mieltä

Halutessasi voit tarkentaa vastaustasi tähän:

12. Olen käynyt tai aion käydä englannin suullisen kurssin (ENA8).

Kyllä
En
En osaa sanoa

Halutessasi voit tarkentaa vastaustasi tähän:

13. Mikäli suullisen kielitaidon koe olisi osana englannin ylioppilaskoetta, kävisin englannin suullisen kurssin (ENA8).

Kyllä
En
En osaa sanoa

Halutessasi voit tarkentaa vastaustasi tähän:

14. Olemme käyttäneet tietokonetta, puhelinta tai muuta mobiililaitetta suullisen kielitaidon harjoitteluun oppitunneilla.

Joka tai joka toinen tunti
Kerran viikossa
Kerran kuukaudessa
Harvemmin kuin kerran kuukaudessa
Ei koskaan

Halutessasi voit tarkentaa vastaustasi tähän:

15. Englannin opetus lukiossa valmistaa opiskelijoita digitaalista ylioppilaskoetta varten.

Täysin samaa mieltä

Jonkin verran samaa mieltä

En osaa sanoa

Jonkin verran eri mieltä

Täysin eri mieltä

Halutessasi voit tarkentaa vastaustasi tähän:

16. Muut mahdolliset kommentit (esim. suullisen kielitaidon opetukseen ja arviointiin, englannin ylioppilaskokeeseen tai tähän kyselyyn liittyen):

Appedix B. Original data examples

1. Melkein joka tunti on jonkun verran pari keskustelua tai jotain muuta sen tapaista. Joka tunti opettaja myös kyselee luokalta asioita, joihin voi viitata ja vastaa yleensä englanniksi.
2. Saatamme toistaa sanoja taululta, joiden ääntäminen voi olla hankalaa. Välillä luetaan kappaleita ja suomennetaan.
3. Teemme suullisia pariharjoituksia joka tunti ainakin paritehtävien ja suomentamisen sekä lukemisen osalta.
4. Joskus lyhyet oppitunnit menevät teoriassa tai läksyjen tarkistamisessa.
5. Välillä voi olla tunteja, ettei ole mutta pääsääntöisesti aina.
6. Riippuu viikosta, joskus koko oppitunti voi sisältää vain suullisia harjoituksia, joskus niitä tulee tehtyä vain n kerran kahdessa viikossa
7. Mielestäni suullisia harjoituksia ja suullisen kielitaidon opetusta tulisi lisätä.
8. Englannin puhuminen on todennäköisesti tärkein taito, jos englantia tulee tarvitsemaan elämässään keskustelu muiden englannin puhujien kanssa tulee sujua. Joten englannin puhumista voisi olla ehkä enemmänkin.
9. Enemmän olisi parempi.
10. Jos kaikki vielä osallistuisi niihin harjoituksiin, niin sitten.
11. Suullisia harjoituksia pitäisi olla enemmän, jotta kielenkäyttö olisi sujuvampaa ja oman kokemuksen mukaan opiskelijoiden pitäisi olla innostuneempia yhteistyöhön, jotta suulliset harjoitukset tulisi tehtyä ja niistä saataisiin hyöty irti.
12. Mielestäni voisi olla enemmän spontaania keskustelua, eikä luettaisi vain kirjasta ääneen.
13. Aina vain sanoja ja kappaleita
14. Usein tehtävät ovat yksitoikkoisia ja samanlaisia. Välillä ne tosin vaihtelevat, mutta yleensä ne seuraavat tiettyä kaavaa.
15. Tehtävien sisällöt ovat aina hyvin samanlaisia. A kysyy harjoitusmonisteen kysymyksiä, B vastaa ja toisinpäin.
16. Monet voivat ottaa paineita kielen puhumisesta, varsinkin jos puhutaan koko luokalle.
17. Jännitän puhumista englanniksi keskinkertaisen ääntämisen takia

18. Haluaisin puhua lisää englantia oppitunnilla, mutta en usko olevani tarpeeksi hyvä ja pelkään, että kuulostan huonolta.
19. En ole viime aikoina käyttänyt englantia paljon, joten taidot ovat heikkontunut, kuten ääntäminen. Tästä syystä olen epävarma ja ujo
20. En osaa lausua, varsinkaan muiden edessä.
21. Riippuen täysin paristani. Jos Vieressäni istuu täysin tuntematon henkilö, niin voi olla etten uskalla puhua oikein yhtään.
22. Englannin puhuminen oppituntien ulkopuolella on minulle helppoa
23. Ihan hauskaa, vaikka kuulostaakin tyhmältä.
24. Kielitaito on tärkeää elämässä, mutta ilmentäkin pärjää. Jos kirjoittaminen ja ymmärtäminen on hyvä.
25. Suullinen kielitaito on monissa tilanteissa tärkeämpää kuin kirjallinen. Matkustellessa ei esimerkiksi voi kirjoittaa kaikkea, vaan on osattava puhua spontaanisti.
26. Suullisen kielitaidon oppiminen on erittäin tärkeää, sillä se tarjoaa tulevaisuuteen korvaamattomia mahdollisuuksia.
27. Elämän kannalta on erittäin tärkeä osata puhua kieltä, kuin vain kirjoittaa sitä. Vaikkakin molemmat ovat tärkeitä olen silti sitä mieltä, että suullisesta kielitaidosta on enemmän hyötyä.
28. Suullinen opiskelu on mielestäni hyödyllistä, jotta opettaja osaa arvioida koko kurssin osaamistaidon. Suullinen opiskelu myös edesauttaa monien sanojen ääntämisessä.
29. Puhetaito voitaisiin liittää yleisesti arvosanaan (nostaa/laskee tarvittaessa) pitämällä suullinen koe, mutta yksittäistä numeroa siitä en haluaisi
30. Jonkinlainen palaute opettajalta voisi tulla suorituksesta, mutta kovin suurta painotusta arviointiin ei pitäisi laittaa, sillä englannin kielellä keskustelusta täytyy jäädä ensisijaisesti miellyttävä kokemus oppilaalle. Kurssi voisi tavoitella nimenomaan innostamaan oppilaita puhumaan englantia enemmän kuin ennen, tällä hetkellä opetus on hieman liian painostavaa.
31. Sitä voitaisiin arvioida paremmin, mutta riippuu tietysti paljon opettajasta. Suullinen osio kokeesta olisi todella hyvä.
32. Muilla voi tulla helpommin kun toisilla, tärkeämpää on opettaminen
33. Ei ole muistaakseni kerrottu
34. Opettaja ei ole erikseen kertonut, mistä arviointi koostuu.

35. En tiedä
36. Kokeet.
37. Osallistuminen ja parikeskustelut tunneilla
38. Muun muassa jotta kuulee, kuinka hyvin osataan puhua, miten ääntäminen sujuu.
39. Oppitunnilla tulee miinusta, jos puhuu suomea.
40. Saa pitää esitelmän ja tuntiaktiivisuus
41. kielioppi
42. Lähinnä yksittäisiä lauseita kavereiden kanssa.
43. Kavereiden kanssa joskus huviksi.
44. Puhun englantia puhuvien ystävien kanssa.
45. Skype ulkomaalaisten kavereiden kanssa.
46. Minulla ja vanhemmillani on paljon ulkomaalaisia kavereita.
47. Juttelen ystäväni kanssa, joka ei osaa suomen kieltä.
48. Puhumme kotona äitini ja siskoni kanssa joitain asioita englanniksi
49. Juttelen joskus kotona sisarusteni ja vanhempieni kanssa englanniksi. Minulla in myös sukulainen joka puhuu englantia ni hänen kanssaan joskus silloin ku se on suomessa.
50. Keskustelen kotona vanhempani kanssa englannin kielellä ja kavereitten kanssa.
51. Esimerkiksi puhun jossain videopelissä englantia.
52. harjoituksissa venäläisten pelaajien kanssa
53. Erilaisissa videopeleissä olevissa chat-palveluissa, joissa on ihmisiä ympäri maailmaa. Mitä tahansa kieltä osaakin, sitä voi käyttää jos tulee sen kielinen henkilö vastaan. Englannin lisäksi käytän esimerkiksi ranskaa.
54. Pelatessa englantia puhuvien kanssa
55. lomamatkoilla
56. Ainoastaan ulkomailla matkustaessa
57. Joskus esim. Helsingissä tai ulkomailla joku kysyy jotain englanniksi.
58. esim. turistien neuvominen
59. Kansainvälisissä kesätyöissä.
60. Kotona ja työssä
61. Työssä joudun välillä palvelemaan asiakkaita englanniksi ja puhumme kavereiden kanssa välillä englantia

62. Saatan käydä keskusteluja englanniksi, omassa päässäni tai suullisesti. Usein myös lukiessani opetustekstejä harjoittelen ääntämistä. Minusta se on kivempaa tehdä rauhassa, eikä niin että muut näkevät ja kuulevat.
63. Käytetyin tapani on varmaan laulaa englanniksi.
64. Höpötän itsekseen joskus englanniksi, jos suomi meinaa tuntua liian hankalalta.
65. Lukiossa opittujen taitojen lisäksi minulla on paljon omaa tietoa.
66. Osaan mielestäni, mutta oikeassa tilanteessa saattaa tulla blackout.
67. Selviän jo
68. Osaan antaa esimerkiksi suunta ohjeita englanniksi, joita usein kysytään kaduilla.
69. Luulin että ylioppilaskokeessa on suullisen kielitaidon koe!? Ehdottomasti, ja mieluiten 2021 mennessä koska silloin kirjoitan englannin
70. Suullinen kielitaidonkoe voisi olla ylioppilaskirjoituksissa olemassa, mutta se olisi siinä valinnainen eli vapaaehtoinen.
71. Suullinen osaaminen on olennainen osa kielitaitoa johon ei mielestäni keskitytä monissa kielissä lähes yhtään
72. Ei. Kaikille puhuminen ei ole mielekästä varsinkaan koetilanteessa, mikä lisää paineita. Lausumista on mielestäni myös huono arvostella, koska pääasia on , että ymmärtää. Kieliopit ja sun muut voi oppia ilman ongelmaa, mutta jotkut eivät välttämättä ikinä pysty oppimaan oikeaa lausumista.
73. Ylioppilaskokeista ottaa muutenkin jo niin paljon stressiä, että suullinen esiintyminen voi olla joillekin ajatuksenakin mahdotonta.
74. En koe tarvitsevani, osaan puhua englantia ja taidon ylläpitämiseen riittää muut kurssit.
75. Jos saisin rohkeutta lisää englannin puhumiseeni voisin käydä
76. Haluan ylittää pelkoni, että puhun huonosti englantia ja kehittää kielitaitoani.
77. En osaa oikein arvioida.
78. En ole varma
79. En osaa sanoa, miten se on edes mahdollista?
80. Kurssi on vasta alkanut, joten vaikea vastata tähän.
81. Ei juuri ole käytetty tietokonetta.
82. Tehdään mielestäni liian paljon tehtäviä jotkai eivät auta paljoa ylioppilaskokeeseen.

83. Ei suullista ylioppilaskokeeseen, kiitos.
84. Suullinen arviointi olisi vain pieni osa ylioppilaskokeessa!
85. Suullisia harjoituksia tulisi olla enemmän! Eikä pelkästään lapulta lauseiden lukemista vaan omia lauseita, vapaata keskustelua jostakin aiheesta!
86. I think there would always be benefit for teaching the students more of the speaking side of English. Because you can't never speak too much. Speaking benefits the learning aspect. I basically learned all my English just by listening and speaking. (englanniksi)
87. Jos ylioppilaskokeeseen tulee suullinen osa, suullisia harjoituksia pitäisi tehdä vielä enemmän ja monipuolisesti tunneilla.